VOIGT

Mrs. Robinson (Talvj)-An Interpreter of German Culture in America

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MRS. ROBINSON [TALVJ]—AN INTERPRETER OF GERMAN CULTURE IN AMERICA

BY

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Irma Elizabeth Voigt

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BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most fascinating and difficult problems which confronts the student of American history is that of the rise and development of a higher national culture in America. The fact that it is closely interwoven with the question of the development of a uniform American nationality out of the various ethnic elements composing the American constitutes its peculiar complexity. What is called American national culture is, at the present day, not the product of the American people as a racial unity, but the result of the contributions made by the civilizations of the various ethnic elements which have met and mingled in this country. While it will remain the task of the future historian of American civilization to determine the share which each of these ethnic elements had in the process of forming a new composite culture, this work cannot be accomplished satisfactorily until a number of single detailed investigations have been made.

It is from this latter point of view that the following study of the life and work of Mrs. Robinson [Talvj] has been undertaken. A woman distinguished as a scholar and author, and representing as a member of the Goethe circle the highest type of German culture, enters America at a period when the higher civilization of this country is in the first stages of its making. German influence in the previous century had not been wanting, but it had been confined chiefly to Pennsylvania, where Philadelphia early became a center of culture, and to New York, where the first original writers of America, men like Irving, Cooper, and Bryant, had

felt its liberalizing touch. On the whole, however, the higher intellectual life of America had been English in character, with a decided leaning, since the time of the Revolution, toward the French spirit. And so it remained until the second decade of the nineteenth century, when a group of spirited men at Harvard inspired by Madame de Staël's book (1814), transferred the completion of their studies to Germany, and there discovered the wealth of German culture. Upon their return to America they began to implant consciously the best seeds of this culture into the rising civilization of the young republic. With the thirties of the last century, American literature and philosophy, philology and historiography,- every branch, in fact, of intellectual activity,- began thus to show the elevating influence of German cultural ideals.

While in the spheres just mentioned the value of this foreign impulse is today more or less recognized, it seems little known that in the field of American theology there was a similar movement. Inasmuch as the husband of the woman of whom this study is to treat was a leader in its inception, a word concerning it may be in place. Despite the fact that theology had been from the first the dominant force in America, it can justly be said that from the modern point of view it was utterly devoid of the scientific spirit. To be sure, among the theologians of the various denominations we find men of a certain amount of learning; but their learning was absolutely sterile. Proudly confident that truth had been established once for all by the fathers of the Reformation, they felt no need of an unremitting search after newer light. During a period of more than two centuries American theology did not produce a single work which could be considered a permanent contri-

bution to theology as a science. So powerful, moreover, was the domination of the theological spirit in America, that it claimed control over all intellectual activity, and resisted every effort to introduce a cultural ideal which did not recognize theological supremacy.

The first attempt at making a breach in this stronghold of the elder dogmatism was the Unitarian movement. A similar, although far less radical attempt at infusing new life into American theology, by bringing it into contact with the new philosophical and scientific spirit of Germany, was made by Professor Edward Robinson, the husband of Talvj. It was for this purpose that he founded, after his return from Germany in 1830, the Biblical Repository, afterwards known as the Bibliotheca Sacra, the pages of which clearly reflect the influence of German culture in the theological field. It is a noteworthy fact that the first volumes of this periodical contain, aside from Robinson's and Moses Stuart's essays, only contributions of German scholars in translation. Thus great was still the dearth of theological scholarship in America at that time. And quite frankly one of the writers states: our American philosophy has continued essentially the same as in the seventeenth century.[1]

While Talvj, as will be seen later, assisted her husband in this work, her chief interests lay, in the wider fields of human culture. In order to estimate correctly her contribution to the national civilization which was then gradually taking form, it may be well in this introductory chapter to give a brief survey

1. Philip Schaff, "German Literature in America", Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. iv, p. 511.

of contemporary conditions of American cultivation. There are two main sources from which we may derive our knowledge of the degree to which social refinement had developed. One of these is to be found in contemporary American literature and in the status of such other expressions of the spirit of the times as higher education, music, art, etc.; the other in the opinions and impressions of the cultured Germans who during this period migrated to America in great numbers. Some of these newcomers were seeking this country as the Utopia of human freedom; others were filled with the hope of finding here an opportunity of taking part in the upbuilding of its civilization. For these latter Gustav Körner,[1] himself a man of academic training, is impelled

1. Gustav Körner (1809 - 1896) came from the academic circles of Frankfurt a/M and Heidelberg, and as a young man entered the activities of American life at its most significant period of development. His career in America is closely associated with the political and historical development of Illinois, he having been supreme judge in this state from 1845 to 1850, and lieutenant governor from 1852 to 1856. Beginning with Van Buren's presidential campaign, he took an active interest in each successive national election. He was especially fitted for campaigning because of his ability to speak fluently in German, English, and French. Not only was he the most confidential advisor of Governor "Dick" Yates, but he was even consulted by President Lincoln in regard to various highly important matters. As a lawyer he was eminently successful, a fact which was recognized by the University of Heidelberg when in 1882 this body conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. His entire life in America, to his very last year, was one of the most intense interest and activity in the land of his adoption. (Cf. Rattermann, vol. xi, p. 219ff.)

by Gottfried Duden's[1] glowing but misleading reports of life in America to raise the questions, "How far has life in the American republic, especially in the new western states, developed in its intellectual and political phases?" and "What restrictions are the present defects of this development likely to lay upon the intellectual freedom of the cultivated immigrants?" He concludes these questions with the remark, "To him who is seeking merely a haven of release from the burdens of sustenance and physical oppression, these considerations, aside from arousing a slight interest, can have no especial significance; but he who is seeking a place in which to move and express himself freely, spiritually as well as physically, certainly must consider well every possible answer to these questions."[2] That men like Körner came here with lofty patriotic intentions is usually overlooked by American historians, as, also, it was frequently unappreciated by their American con-

1. As early as 1824 Gottfried Duden had taken up a temporary abode about 80 miles from St. Louis. From here he wrote most attractive and alluring letters to his friends in Germany, and because of the respect in which he was held, both by virtue of his intellectuality and his political prominence in his fatherland, these letters had a very great influence. But unfortunately Duden was a man in whom theory did not grow out of practice, and theoretically he had found in America the Utopia for which he was seeking. Attracted by his favorable reports, in the hope of finding a land abounding in milk and honey, many highly cultured German families came to this country in 1832 to settle in the same spot which Duden had left, in a sudden access of disappointment, after a two years' residence. After several years spent in America Körner became impressed with the fact that many of Duden's reports were altogether incorrect and misleading, and this led him in 1834 to write and publish his work entitled, Beleuchtung des Duden'schen Berichtes über die westlichen Staaten Nordamerikas. Von Amerika aus. (Cf. Körner, Das deutsche Element, p. 299ff.

2. Körner, Beleuchtung des Duden'schen Berichtes, 1834, p. 45.

temporaries. It was because America was to be their future home that these men were so deeply interested in getting a correct view of the entirety of American life, of its physical as well as its intellectual and cultural side. This very fact also makes the notes of German travelers, which upon first consideration might seem but hasty and superficial, of the greatest significance. The chief object of all these reports, whether by cultivated German residents or by travelers, was to give to future German emigrants the accurate knowledge they were seeking; and this despite a feeling on the part of many Americans that these men were spying upon them in order to be able to ridicule America upon their return to the Fatherland. That their attitude was keenly critical and their expressions boldly truthful is but natural, and argues neither against their hopefulness for America's future nor against their confidence in and respect for her achievements. The reports in almost all cases give evidence of the characteristically critical and scientific viewpoint of the cultured German. But before considering further the status of American culture as interpreted by these men, we may profitably consider what our contemporary American sources have to tell us on this subject.

Perhaps the one great obstacle which at first retarded the development of American culture and later frequently resulted in its misdirection, was a lack of national unity. From the earliest period, the spirit of nationality had had to fight its way, stubbornly resisted all along its course, by local pride. The first breaking away from the bondage of sectionalism followed the extreme ardor of the times which immediately preceded final unification, and in consequence American literature began to assume as

early as 1789 the appearance at least of a national literature. But the new-fledged aggressive Americanism was ignorant of the fact that it was impossible to create by conscious effort truly national poetry, music, or art. To this statement it must be added that America, in her origin as well as in her literary standards, was provincial, not national. She declared her political independence of England, but at the same time continued to follow English models in almost every other regard. Only here and there was heard occasionally the voice of original poetry, as, for instance, when Philip Freneau recognized the Indian as a fit subject for romantic treatment.

Because, therefore, of its decidedly imitative character, it was not until the nineteenth century that American literature was considered with anything but indifference or even contempt by other countries. When this new era was ushered in, by Washington Irving and others, it came as the result of travel by American men of letters among the countries of Europe, and an honest effort on their part to imbibe the culture of the older civilizations. A natural and praiseworthy desire to create and possess a literature which should truly represent the nation began to take root and offered a strong incentive to write. However, while sharing in this desire for a wider national life, each section of the country retained its own peculiar characteristics and aims. This would have been very well had each of these sections still developed a literature national in its character, as, for instance, the German principalities and territories did during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, maintaining as it were, a unity in variety. But conjoined with this sectionalism was a local jealousy which made each

section feel its own peculiar preeminence as a center of national culture. New England, surprising as it may seem, played a small role in the rise of national literature. She was greatly surpassed by the South and the Middle States. There was then, as there is now, a tendency to slight the work of the South and give Northern writers an undue prominence. Yet an impartial survey shows that the warm, imaginative, and romantic Southern nature has given most significantly to American literature. The failure of critics to allot due recognition to Southern influence may be due to her lack of any definite schools of writers. The history of Southern culture is largely a history of isolated careers. Had the South possessed the same advantages as New England, she would undoubtedly have achieved results that would have thrown all the weight of literary prestige on her side.[1] In the Middle States we find Philip Freneau from New Jersey and Charles Brockden Brown from Philadelphia, both of whom were without New England rivals. As late as 1846 Edgar Allan Poe claimed that the authors in New York City included one-fourth of all in America. Their influence, though seemingly silent, was extensive and decisive. From Irving's advent in 1807 to that of Longfellow and Emerson, New York was certainly entitled to the distinction of being a literary center. But with the founding of the North American Review in 1815 in Boston, a new spirit which greatly modified the narrowness and sternness of the old Puritanism entered New England.

The causes of this shifting of centers of culture is explained by the fact that the Southern temperament and the Southern mode of life fitted its men to excel in an era of oratory. When, how-

1. Cf. Pancoast, Introduction to American Literature, p. 259.

ever, the era changed to one of purely literary cultivation, intellectual supremacy, as is noted above, lay first with Philadelphia and later with New York. Tom Moore said in 1840 that Philadelphia was the only place in America that could boast of a literary society. The cultural sceptre was all the more certain of award to the Middle Atlantic states from the fact that New England's genius was still, at this period, bound by religious prejudice. When the famous group of Boston writers broke the bonds, their work bore the stamp of a popular movement. This was undoubtedly due to an effort on the part of these men to give expression to the ideas and ideals of universality and liberality which many of them had imbibed in their study and travel in Europe, and especially in Germany. The most salient phase of the reaction against the stern Puritanical doctrines which held sway in New England for so long was, as has already been emphasized, the rise of Unitarianism. The effect of this movement on literature was remarkable, for it brought with it the assertion of individual opinions and freedom of thought. When Unitarianism finally took an organized form in 1815 it embodied in its creed, if it may be said to have a creed, the idea of wider culture. Channing, one of its greatest representatives, went to England and through Coleridge imbibed and brought back with him the 'new life' which the latter had found in German thought and ideals. With Channing culture was religion. Through Unitarianism, then, we may say that the gates were opened to the intellectual impulses of Europe at a time when the mother nations were aglow with new ideas and philosophies.[1] In 1820 Edward Everett returned from Germany inspired by the new great world of thought with which he had met. But New England, as well as the country at large, lacked the

1. Cf. Pancoast, p. 163 and 252.

thousand beautiful associations of poetry, legend, and art that gave to European culture its magic. Longfellow, perhaps more than any other native writer, felt the American need for the refining and cultivating influences that were so powerful in the Old World. A fortunate circumstance afforded him, very early in his career, the opportunity for study abroad, an opportunity which lasted for three years, and which was repeated later in his life. His Hyperion shows most decidedly of all his works, how deeply he was imbued with the German spirit. And with all his European culture and the expression he gave to it, he was more truly the poet of the American democracy than any other American writer, contemporary or subsequent. This is certainly a powerful argument for thevalue of a universal culture in the development of a national culture.

Absolute self-knowledge, as Goethe remarks, is impossible for theindividual as well as for a nation. It is here that the observation of the friendly critic becomes of the greatest value. While American scholars give us a fairly just view of conditions at that time, the detailed observations and criticisms of the cultured German students of American life, mentioned above, throw a light upon these conditions which is all the more interesting because it emanates from men representing the cultural ideals which were to become so powerful in America.

One of the criticisms which Americans frequently made upon themselves was that their cultural development as a nation was haltingly slow. Foreign students of American history attribute this belated social ripening to various causes. One on which all seem to be more or less agreed is the exaggerated emphasis placed upon

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business and its attendant profits. Körner says that even a greater hindrance than the lack of racial unity or the defects in educational methods is the subordination of science to business. The former is pursued only in so far as it is an adjunct and servant to the latter. That merchants had no need for a liberal culture seemed to be a national axiom. Another explanation suggested by Körner as partially responsible for this lack of cultural development was that America's early settlers in New England and elsewhere did not bring a literature or history with them, for they belonged for the most part to an oppressed people and, with the exception of a few learned clergymen, to a class possessed of little general education. They left their fatherland at a time when higher education was quite generally the prerogative of the rich and powerful. Those, moreover, who did possess education and culture in their fatherland before coming to America, Grund[1] felt were not different enough from their brothers in Europe to manifest at once enduring national character-

1. Franz Joseph Grund (1798 - 1863) came to America in 1825 or 1826. In 1833 he wrote a book entitled Algebraic Problems, from whose publication dates the introduction of algebra into the American High Schools. In addition to this book he also wrote a Plain and Solid Geometry, an Elements of Astronomy, a Natural Philosophy, and an Advanced Mathematics. After a ten years' residence in Boston preceded by a two years' residence in New York and Philadelphia, he wrote his The Americans in their Moral, Social, and Political Relations. For a period of over thirty years beginning about 1830, he was actively engaged in journalism. During Buchanan's administration he was consul to Havre. He is sometimes called the Schurz of the first half of the nineteenth century. (Cf. Rattermann, vol. x, p. 70ff.)

istics. The almost daily influx of immigrants and the hardships of pioneer life made the basis of liberal development, in early times, transient and unstable, whereas the highest ideal of culture presupposes the production of such permanent values in literature, science, music, philosophy, and theology, as will be of benefit to the whole of civilized humanity.

At the root of the growth of such a culture lies education. The Americans were never lacking, certainly, in the scholastic idea. One of the main motives back of Jefferson's action in establisning the University of Virginia was the hope of developing a national character by means of a cosmopolitan scheme of education. As a broad foundation underlying all subjects was to exist the scientific point of view, the lack of which, as will be noticed later, was to German students one of the weaknesses in American education. His plans were like the preliminary drawings of a great artist. Even in their undeveloped state they indicated a remarkable appreciation of the university idea which had given western European education such superiority over all other of the world's systems. Jefferson's ideal was so thoroughly European that he even harbored for a time the idea of transplanting the entire teaching corps from the College of Geneva to America; for this faculty, which had become dissatisfied with its political environment, had written to him saying that they were willing to come to Virginia in a body if suitable arrangements could be made. This proposal (1794) was really the historical origin of his project for a great university, to be equipped with the best scientific talent that Europe could afford, which, strangely enough, Jefferson thought was at that time centered in Geneva.[1]

1. Cf. "Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia", U.S. Bureau of Education, Circular of Information No.2, 1888, p. 45.

He appealed to Washington, but the latter, narrow in his view and unappreciative of the cultural value of a cosmopolitan education, opposed the plan. Jefferson laid the proposition also before the state legislature, but the practical Virginians thought the plan too expensive. However, the advanced ideas of the third president, although not fulfilled in this matter, had a quickening influence on Ticknor, a close personal friend, and through him upon the whole method of instruction at Harvard. Ticknor received a call to Virginia in 1820, but continued at Harvard until 1835, when his resignation was forced by stubborn opposition to just such reforms as would have reorganized the northern college in accordance with the principles of university education laid down by Jefferson.[1]

Perhaps the chief point of weakness in American education at that time was the Puritanical disregard for scholarship and the way in which the Puritan spirit treated the university professors. Dr. Brauns, a highly cultured German theologian who lived in America for years, says that very few if any of the American academies and universities were liberal enough to allow their professors to turn to the service of scientific research their talent, inclination, and independent thought.[2] Moreover, the recompense

1. The main points of Jefferson's plan for a university were: 1- There should be no prescribed curriculum laid down for all students. 2- Specialization should be introduced. 3- The elective system should be used. 4- Discipline should be reduced to a minimum. The reforms proposed by Ticknor were: 1. Students should be admitted even if they were not candidates for a degree. 2. The instruction should be divided into departments with a head of each department. 3. The elective system should be introduced. (Cf. U.S.Bureau of Education, Circular of Information No. 2).

2. Brauns, Ideen über die Auswanderung nach Amerika, 1827, p. 686.

given them was scarcely greater than that allowed a day-laborer.[1]

Grund quotes and emphasizes the following statement from an "Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools of the State of New York, 1835": "The main cause which retards the advancement of our educational system is the meager wage of the teachers..... As long as the salary of a teacher is no higher than that of the manual laborer we cannot expect to attract scholars of talent and ability to our schools. Low salaries have filled our schools with incompetent teachers whose methods have lowered the level of all knowledge to their own teaching." To the same effect Brauns quotes Bristed, a British scholar who came to America to study American resources and later became a citizen of the United States: "Wealth, that is truly the great social virtue even as poverty is an unpardonable sin. In no land of the earth must the poor scholar bow before the gates of wealth in more slavish humility than in our free and independent Republic."[2] Commenting on this, Brauns says, "Let not the scholar forget that farmers, manufacturers, and merchants are really the three main and privileged classes of American society."[3] In addition to pointing out that low salaries necessarily entailed a dearth of teachers Bristed, as well as our German critics, reminds us that those scholarly professors whom we do have in our schools have a limit placed on their time and energy by their great burden of purely routine duties.[4] One of Ticknor's great reforms was a division of the faculty into departments, with departmental heads, and sufficient assistants to make research and origi-

1. Grund, Die Amerikaner, p. 121.

2. Brauns, Ideen, p. 697. Also Bristed, Die Hilfsquellen der Vereinigten Staaten Amerikas, Weimar 1819. p. 686.
3. Brauns, Ideen, p. 697.
4. Bristed, Hilfsquellen, p. 428.

nal production possible. This was one of his proposals that was most stubbornly resisted. In defending it Jefferson said, "Professorships must be subdivided from time to time as our means increase, until each professor shall have no more under his care than he can attend to with advantage to his pupils and ease to himself."[1]

Almost all foreign students of American education were agreed on the excellence of American elementary training. Brauns was especially impressed with the almost universal extension of the rudiments of education.[2] The middle schools, however, as Körner remarked, were rather for the purpose of private gain than of popular instruction.[3] Parents, generally, were not yet impressed with the necessity of educating their children beyond the elementary grades. But, as Dr. De Wette, the brother of Professor Karl Beck of Harvard, said after his visit to America in 1826, the American youths were wonderfully persevering and diligent. One of the chief expressions of this diligence was the zeal with which they took up the study of the German language and literature, very little opportunity for the pursuit of which was offered at the American universities. Even private tutors were not plentiful; and many students, therefore, took up the study by themselves with no other help than a dictionary and a few pieces of German literature, of which Goethe's and Schiller's works were perhaps the most popular. Imagine the American youth of today obtaining the rudiments of German through a translation of Wallenstein! Later this method was no longer necessary, for many of the professors at Andover, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth,

1. U. S. Bureau of Education, Circular of Information No.2, p.64.
2. Brauns, Ideen, p. 433.
3. Körner, Beleuchtung, p. 46.

and elsewhere went to Germany and mastered the German language for purposes of instruction at home. It should be noted here that this zeal for acquiring German was prompted not by a mere hope of understanding its forms, but by an earnest desire to gain entrance to the treasures of German thought.

Perhaps the next most significant point to come under the notice of the German observers of American culture was the deplorable rarity of interest in science. While Grund did not deny the existence of a spirit of scientific inquiry, as Körner came so near doing, he did say that it had few manifestations beyond the information contained in elementary texts.[1] The one science in which the Americans had made slightly greater progress was mathematics, and he, probably better than any other foreign writer, could judge this because of his authorship of several university texts in mathematics and other sciences. The Germans placed especial emphasis on science and scientific research, for to them science was eternal even as truth was eternal. "Monarchs may protect the arts, republics must honor the sciences",[2] said Grund. The search for truth would alone establish, in their estimation, an enduring national prosperity. It cannot be denied that the stern, narrow views of the early American settlers in religion and politics retarded all progress in art and science, and this despite the great number of universities, colleges, and seminaries.[3] Brauns quotes Walsh,[4] an American schol-

1. Cf. Grund, Die Amerikaner, 1837, p. 105.
2. Grund, Die Amerikaner, p. 80.
3. Körner, Beleuchtung, p. 51.
4. Walsh was the original editor of the American Register in 1817 - 18. In 1827 he revived the North American Review, and continued as its editor until 1837.

ar, as saying, "A liberal education under which a systematic grasp of science and classical literature is understood, is almost entirely lacking in America."[1] Aside from a few minor discoveries and inventions in the sciences of physics and nautical technique, purely practical in nature, America had made no advance in the field of science.[2] This, at least, was the view of the more radical Körner, who continued to say," Indeed, I am not the first to be impressed by the lack of genuine scientific education, and the manifold pleasures which are brought about by the closer intercourse of highly cultured and educated men."[3]

If, as Grund says, imagination is the soul of artistic production, we have an explanation for the decided deficiency in America; for we do not need Körner, nor Grund, nor Julius[4] to tell us of the lack of imagination in the American people. Even Cooper, as Körner says truly, one of the best early American writers, perhaps beside Longfellow, the most representative figure in American literature, excels only in description, and not in such work as requires an active and fertile creative power.[5] This lack of imagination, Julius feels,[6] accounts for the almost cruel way in which the Americans have discarded the old musical and resonant Indian names of towns, rivers, and mountains, and substituted in their place the harsher sounding Roman, Grecian, German, English, and

1. Brauns, Ideen, p. 685.
2. Körner, Beleuchtung, p. 47.
3. Ibidem, p. 47.
4. N. H. Julius (1783-1862) a physician and student of sociology, especially criminology. He made one of the first and most extensive statistical studies in criminology in America.
5. Cooper was more highly esteemed in Germany than in America.
6. Julius, Nordamerikas sittliche Zustände, 1834-36, p. 420.

even Egyptian names. But besides a recognized lack of imagination Brauns discovers other causes which have retarded the development of art and literature. These he considers under four heads; first, the comparative ease with which wealth and prominence are attained through other channels than literature or art; second, the hardships of early settlement; third, our own Revolution; and fourth, the French Revolution, which inclined the Americans more toward a zeal for gain, military glory, and political fame, than to the less strenuous pleasures and benefits of literature and art. In addition to these causes, DeWette, with others, attributes the retardation of a nationally independent literature for America to the constant intercourse with Europe; or, as Grund puts it, to the fact that a gigantic conglomeration, such as America is, cannot produce a national literature.[1] Again, Brauns adds as a further cause a lack of concentration, due, he believes, to an overbalancing tendency toward newspapers, magazines, and political pamphlets.[2] As a people the Americans read more than any other nation in the world; indeed Grund goes so far as to say that the Americans read more books and magazines each year than the English, French, and Germans together.[3] John Bristed, after a careful study of American culture, remarks also on the shallowness of American writings, which seemed, for the most part, confined to newspaper articles and political pamphlets.[4]

Concentration presupposes a calm philosophical point of view. The lack of this was more noticeable, probably, in America's

1. Grund, Die Amerikaner, p. 98.
2. Cf. Brauns, Ideen, p. 681ff.
3. Grund, Die Amerikaner, p. 1o4.
4. Bristed, Die Hilfsquellen, p. 685.

historical productions than elsewhere in the field of her literature. Led astray by hyper-enthusiastic patriotism, Americans inclined too much toward biographies. Even Jared Sparks and George Bancroft, two historians who deserve great praise, were unable to take a dispassionate view of America's historical development,- the only view, indeed, which is able to unite the life of the states with the course of human development. Up to 1837, in Grund's estimation, Marshal's Biography of George Washington was the best history of the United States.[1]

So far it would seem that this lack of imagination affected only the literary productions; however, Körner's rather bold remark that as regards art the Americans were half barbarians,[2] reveals the fact that the lack of imagination extended beyond the field of literature. As yet whatever America possessed of art was not original but of foreign adoption. However, Grund believed that the Americans possessed sufficient talent both in drawing and painting to make a truly national art a future possibility.[3] That the Americans did not possess any real love or passion for true art, a fact which Körner deplored, was due, no doubt, in large measure to the lack of the numerous galleries and collections of art treasures with which Europe, on the other hand, was blessed. But despite this lack we must agree, I believe, with Körner, when he says that if gloomy religious views retarded science they worked even more negatively against the development of art.[4] Music and painting were completely in the service of the church. If some art

1. Grund, Die Amerikaner, p. 106. See also Pancoast, p. 253.
2. Körner, Beleuchtung, p. 52.
3. Grund, Die Amerikaner, p. 74.
4. Körner, Beleuchtung, p. 51.

lover succeeded in transporting a work of art across the Atlantic, it received such a poor reception that the hope of arousing an interest which would create a demand for such work was shattered.

Closely allied with drawing and painting were music and the theater. The taste for music was slightly more developed than for tragedy and comedy, Grund tells us, but as yet there was no American talent. Indeed, Julius says, the Americans were virtually lacking in the musical sense and in musical voices. Of this latter deficiency he says, "In the whole of America, during a visit of a year and a half, I heard a single beautiful native female voice, and among the men none at all."[1] The lack of a musical sense, he thinks, may be due to the fact that America was a composite unit and not a racial unit. He noticed the same lack in England, also a composite unit in contrast to Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, strictly racial unities. The lack of musical voices, no doubt, could be attributed to the climate and its almost inconceivably rapid changes. One decided hindrance to the development of the theater, as well as its hand-maiden music, was the stifling bonds of narrow orthodoxy which placed the enjoyment of the stage outside the pale of respectability. Many churches absolutely forbade attendance at dramatic performances of any description. Even at the present time we have not broken away entirely from the effects of this prejudice.

This, then, was the atmosphere into which Mrs. Robinson came in 1830, an atmosphere pregnant with possibilities and teeming with an intense desire to produce and establish a national culture. German influence, as we have noticed, was having a major share in

1. Julius, Nordamerikas sittliche Zustände, p. 419.

the process of development. In the following chapters I shall attempt to trace the path of this influence as represented in Mrs. Robinson, one of the highest types of German culture and refinement, and a woman possessed of a mind capable of directing the existing enthusiasm for German thoughts and ideals into its proper channels. In order to understand and appreciate her influence, always so subtle and quiet, it has seemed necessary to give it the background just presented. In an attempt to develop her significant position among the writers of America, the following study takes up her works chronologically, in so far as that is consistent with their grouping in subject matter, with an especial endeavor to lay emphasis on the various individual productions most directly connected with contemporary American events or development. Gustav Körner's quotation, spoken of the German nation, happily fits the character and work of Mrs. Robinson and so seems to be a most appropriate close for this introductory chapter: "The German nation cannot exist as such within the American, but she can cast "into the general melting-pot" the rich contents of her nobility of character. The treasures of her realm of thought she can send forth into the struggle for political and human development. Her influence will go deeper, it will draw unto itself a larger field in which to work, the farther it divorces itself from all bias, and the more it holds fast to that which Germany has given to the world of beauty and greatness."[1]

1. Körner, Das deutsche Element, p. 9.

CHAPTER I.

Biography.

The names of Franz Lieber, Karl Follen, Karl Beck, Franz Joseph Grund, Gustav Körner, all men of commanding ability, have long since become a part of the history of their adopted country. Many more men whose life and works H. A. Rattermann has treated in his recent work Biographikon und Dichter Album, will also eventually find permanent place in the cultural, if not the political history of America. In this list of German-Americans who have given to Americans not only an interpretation of the culture of their father-land, but also the service of their talent and their personality is the name of one woman; who, working with the delicacy and discrimination peculiar to her sex, achieved an influence upon American life no less deep and powerful, although perhaps less immediately visible than that of the men I have mentioned.

It is indeed strange that this has not been recognized; for her field of labor was broad, her intellect keen, her attitude toward life truly sympathetic. From the commencement of her active career in 1830, to the year 1863, when she returned to Germany, she identified her energies and interests with those of the country of her husband, modestly taking a part in the cultural evolution of the young republic by means of literary productions. At no time do we find her in the front ranks of radical reformers and reorganizers, but tactfully and unassumingly, rather, exerting that subtle influence for which women are best suited. Her method of making her personality felt was an opportunely happy one, for at the time in which

she lived - one of the most important in American History - current opinion in regard to conditions both political and social was in a comparatively plastic state, but none the less important. With politics she had nothing to do; for while most of her German contemporaries, coming directly from the excitement of political affairs in the fatherland entered similar fields in America, she remained entirely outside of this field of activity. This is in part explained by the fact that she came from the quietness of the Goethe circle, which in a measure determined the character of her work in the land of her adoption. Goethe, it may be said, held aloof from the turmoil and intensity of the life about him, quietly spreading his influence through the brilliant men and women who were attracted to his intellectual court. This was especially true during his later life, during which time Mrs. Robinson became personally acquainted with him. When we consider that with this philosophical serenity, imbibed from so potent a source, was combined a natural reserve and retirement of temperament, we cannot wonder at the unusual quietness and lack of pretension with which she went about her work.

Indeed how much this modesty was a personal quality of the woman herself as well as a main characteristic of her public labors, we have various ways of estimating. Grillparzer draws a very charming picture of her in his Selbstbiographie: "Toward evening", he writes, "I went to Goethe. I found quite a large company gathered in the drawing room, awaiting the Herr Geheimrat. When I found among them a certain Hofrath Jakob or Jakobs with his daughter, young as she was beautiful, and beautiful as she was talented, the same who later entered upon a literary career under the

name of Talvj, I lost my timidity, and in my conversation with this most amiable young woman, I almost forgot that I was at the home of Goethe."[1] The description of Heloise, drawn by Mrs. Robinson in her novel of the same name, presents a very good picture of herself and of the position she deemed suitable and becoming to women: "Now only did Heloise learn to know the charm of intellectual, inciting conversation, the invaluable advantage to be derived from hearing the interchange of ideas of superior minds. Heloise, eager for information and susceptible of improvement as she was, felt deeply grateful toward Isabella for this distinction. The conversation turned on subjects taken from divers departments, belles-lettres, philosophy, history, political economy, but above all the great questions of the day. On all these Heloise heard persons of mind give and defend their views. She herself, as was suitable to her youth was for the most part a listener."[2] Mrs. Robinson might have said, 'to her youth and her sex'; for she felt very strongly the propriety of the tacit attitude of woman on many questions ordinarily considered as a part of a man's world.[3]

But, as we have said, her influence was none the less real for being quiet and insidious. Despite the unpretentious nature of her work, no one, with the exception of Karl Follen, Franz Lieber

1. Grillparzer, Sämmtliche Werke, Vol.xv, p.145 - 4te Auflage.
2. Talvj, Heloise, chap. ix.
3. The Germans more than any other nation,perhaps,felt that woman's sphere was in the home. A German woman's highest ambition and aim was to be the mother or wife of some great man. We find this throughout history. When Madame de Stäel said to Frau Räthin Goethe, "I am Madame de Stäel, Frau Goethe replied, "And I am the mother of Goethe." The Empress Maria Theresa sought her own praise in the successful reign of her son Joseph II. We can well imagine Mrs. Robinson finding the chief source of her pride in being the wife of Professor Robinson.

and J. B. Stallo has so significantly brought out the two chief elements of the American nation, the English and the German. By her study of the folklore of the various nations and especially the Teutonic nations, she carried the American people into the inner life of the Germans, especially into "Das Gemütvolle". By her history of New England, written, according to her own introductory remarks, primarily for German readers, she introduced the Germans to the forces which lay at the foundation of the establishment of a free-thinking, free-acting nation, showing how internal forces of minor importance in themselves may accomplish all things when united and aimed at one goal.

Theresa Albertine Louisa von Jakob was born January 26, 1797, the youngest daughter of the political scientist and philosopher, Heinrich von Jakob. At the time of her birth, her father was professor of philosophy at the University of Halle. When Theresa was nine years old Napoleon's devastations shook Germany like some great earthquake, and disorganized society. After the battle of Jena her father, in order to avoid army-service at a moment when his fatherland was under French dominion, accepted a call to a professorship in the University located at Charkow a small town in the southern part of Russia. The great period of European political unrest that drove her parent to this voluntary exile from Germany wrought an unusual and irresistible influence upon the daughter; an influence,doubtless,which made her love her native land far more intensely than would have been the case, had she grown to womanhood surrounded by nought but its tranquil culture. In 1840 she wrote a short sketch embodying autobiographical material for the Brockhausischen Conversations=Lexikon, in which these words illustrate

the awakening in her of "das deutsche Gefühl", together with what she considered its causes: "The strange, half-Asiatic, half-European circumstances about me exercised a decided influence upon me. They and the yoke of oppression under which Germany was then bending and laboring awoke in me, very early, a vivid and substantial recognition of my better self. As early as my eleventh year, I often wept for anger and grief over Germany's misfortune. Grief, indeed, was my first muse."[1] Nothing, it seemed in after years, had ever so thoroughly aroused her as the occasion when she heard, for the first time, the Russians discussing the terrible distress of the Germans. She heard nothing but scorn and mockery for Germany's misfortune, in fact for everything that was German. Her thoroughly aroused emotions found expression in poetry which in tone and meter resembled that of Schiller. Even as a child, she realized how much richer the German life was than the Slavic. She felt that a nation with such a past as Germany's would glow again in the rays of a clear sunrise.

During her stay of three years in Charkow her education, so far as direct instruction was concerned, advanced slowly. In the university library, however, she found, among other books, Eschenburg's Beispielsammlung and the supplement to Sulzer's Theorie der schönen Künste. She copied both of these books, ponderous in material and dimensions as they are, in their entirety; a labor of stupendous proportions for an adult to say nothing of a twelve-year-old girl. But she was being mentally starved and no task seemed too great that would provide food to satisfy her intel-

1. Talvj. Gesammelte Novellen, p. viii.

lectual cravings.

At the age of thirteen she accompanied her father to St. Petersburg, whither he had been called to aid in the revision of the Code of Criminal Laws. Here even the slight amount of instruction she had been receiving was cut off. In a measure, however, her more frequent intercourse with people and events made up for this loss; but the subjective longing never ceased. She tells us, "The inner desire remained, however, earnest and full of yearning after something which the life about me did not offer."[1] Her interest in and for Germany grew apace. She read zealously every possible scrap of information about it, devouring in particular all the German books she could get hold of, books which from time to time found their way into Russia through returning officers. In order to give assistance to the miserable German prisoners brought to Russia she sold her jewelry. Removed thus from the fatherland, it was only natural that she should form an exalted image of Germany which differed very radically from the reality. In later years, she held for a time firmly, almost stubbornly to her ideal; but at last, for her penetrating mind could not long be blinded to real conditions, she grew ashamed, laughed, and cast from her the romantic picture she had formed by much reading of Fouque and Hoffmann. She so realized and appreciated, nevertheless, the depth, the richness, and the spiritual intensity of the German character, that even the final shattering of her ideal never brought with it a reaction of discouragement or despair. While in St. Petersburg she became bitterly lonesome, and as a consequence unusually serious. This seriousness never left her, though at no time did it

1. Talvj, Gesammelte Novellen, p. x.

make her an uncomfortable or unwelcome member of any social gathering. It was the seriousness of a rich inner life whose expression was hemmed in and limited by external circumstances. None of the poems which she wrote at this time were published during her lifetime; in fact it is quite probable that she destroyed most of them, for inasmuch as they expressed her deepest and holiest emotions, to publish them would have been a profanation of her inmost soul. Several, however, were preserved. Among them the poem "Sehnsucht," written in 1813 and brought out after her death, expresses her longing to return to Germany. One verse reads as follows:

Ach, wird nie dies heisse Sehnen
Nie der inn'ge Wunsch gestillt?
Was mein hoffend Herz erfüllt
Wär es nur ein eitel Wähnen?

In St. Petersburg she had greater opportunity to satisfy her craving to read. This, together with bits of conversation which she gathered from the crowds that thronged the streets, aroused in her a deep and abiding interest in popular poetry. She became so interested in Russian popular poetry that she would steal away to the horse-markets, and concealing herself near the crowds, would listen to their songs. In order to be able to understand them and appreciate them she began studying Russian, a pursuit which very shortly led to a study of Slavic history and the slavic language, in order that she might be able to translate the poetry of the race. Upon her return to Germany her interest in languages expanded and she entered into a serious attempt to gain a mastery of the classical languages, Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and English. Later she studied French and Spanish.

In 1816 her dearest wish was fulfilled by a return to

Germany; a country which she had learned to love with all the filial tenderness of an involuntary exile, and with a loyalty that was destined to endure uninterrupted even after she transferred her residence to America as the wife of Edward Robinson. When she had left her native country as a girl of nine years, she did not know Germany. When at sixteen she returned, her patriotism was unquenchably lighted. Her reintroduction to the real Germany, as we have said before, shattered her ideal but did not shake her love or faith. In this glow of happiness in her new environment, the first eight or ten years were the most prosperous of her life. She continued to write poetry and short stories. A peculiar unwillingness to publish her works asserted itself in rather an interesting way, for which her excessive modesty alone can account. Those of her first poems which she could be persuaded to share with the public came out over the name of Reseda. In 1821, for the need of a little "pin-money", and, if we may credit her own words, quite against her own inclination, she translated two of Sir Walter Scott's novels, Old Mortality and Black Dwarf. These were signed Ernst Berthold. In 1822, in the Literarisches Konversationsblatt appeared three articles of a critical nature, signed "Briefe eines frauenzimmers". Finally, in 1825 she coined for herself a name which remained her nom-de-plume for the rest of her life. Using the initial letters of her full name, Theresa Albertina Louisa von Jakob, she coined the rather odd but attractive name Talvj, in which the j has its original function as an i. This name she first signed to a little book of three short stories, which she called Psyche, Ein Taschenbuch für das Jahr 1825. As late as 1840 she wrote to a relative, "I will not deny that I have a strong

aversion to any publication whatsoever of my own productions. The fact, that I had never written under my own name, justified me, I felt, in separating all that pertained to Theresa Robinson, formerly Theresa von Jakob, entirely from Talvj. I see, however, that sooner or later the two names will be identified without my being able to prevent it, and so I prefer to let myself be known rather than be the subject of gossip in those 'Woman's Clubs'."[1] For a long time Talvj was thought to be a man. Especially after her interest in the American Indian became known, Mr. Talvj became a name of great concern in English literature and men fairly broke their heads to discover the owner of it.

In 1823, while Talvj was immersed in grief over the loss of a dearly beloved sister, the first real sorrow in her life, her eye fortuitously fell upon a copy of Jakob Grimm's criticism of Servian folk song. It caught her attention and suggested a means to her by which she might lessen the sting of her sorrow. Hard work was ever a means to her of forgetting sorrow and distress. In speaking to Jakob Grimm of leaving Germany to take up her new home in America she said, "This sacrifice, too, belongs to the least which I am making, inasmuch as the literary activity into which I have thrown myself, in so far as it was productive, never meant anything more to me than a meager solace for bitter loss."[2] Her cousin said of her also, "My poor cousin finds her consolation for many distressing circumstances in such literary activity."[3] By the aid of the young Servian Wuk Stephan Karadschitsch and her

1. Löher, Beiträge für Geschichte und Völkerkunde.
2. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol.lxxvi, p. 357.
3. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 357.

own untiring effort and mental alertness she soon made good her decision to study Servian by achieving a sound working mastery of its forms. Into the very atmosphere of these strange national songs which seemed to possess a Grecian charm for her, she "lived, thought, and steeped herself."[1] Her work in this connection will be more amply touched upon hereafter; suffice it to say here, the work she accomplished with these songs won for her the life long friendship of Goethe, as well as that of Jakob Grimm and many other prominent literary men.

In the summer of 1826 Professor Edward Robinson came to Halle to study the language and literature of the Orient under Gesenius, through whom Halle's theological school had become the most famous in Germany, Rödiger, an exceptional student in oriental languages first at Halle and later at Berlin, Tholuk the pietist, and others. His acquaintance in the home of Professor von Jakob led to the friendship and ultimate marriage with Fräulein Theresa, in August of 1828. A few words about Robinson will show not merely the significance of Talvj's relations with him but also the significance of German influence on America's great scholars. He was born in Southington, Connecticut in 1794, the son of a Congregational minister. As a youth he enjoyed a liberal education, which later he improved and deepened by much travel and study in other lands. Previous to his residence at the University of Halle in 1826, he had assisted Moses Stuart in publishing the second edition of the latter's Hebrew Grammar, and through Stuart had been appointed to an instructorship in Hebrew at Andover Seminary; where, in collaboration with his patron, he translated Winer's Grammar of the New

1. Franz von Löher, Beilage zur allgemeinen Zeitung, d. 9ten u. 10ten Juni, 1870.

Testament; and alone, Wahl's Clavis Philologica Novi Testamenti. Then he went to Halle. At the time of his death he was recognized as the greatest authority in the field of Biblical Topography, having received, among other honors, a gold medal from the Royal Geographical Society of England.

His attitude toward research was in every way a counterpart of his wife's. The Reverend Thomas Skinner, who preached his funeral service, said of him, "No one's observation was more searching, minute, and accurate; he looked at everything in its bearing on the true, the useful, the good; he surveyed most exactly everything of real importance in the field which his mind was to traverse, instinctively rejecting what was of no consequence to his object, making the best use of everything which properly belonged to it. ... His aim was not victory but truth..... He found in his family unusual sympathies with himself as a man of letters and intellectual pursuits. His wife was entirely competent to take the livliest interest in his learned labors."[1] It is very significant of his character that during this first half of the nineteenth century he with others sought to become acquainted with the spirit of German thought and teaching. In the first part of the century it meant a great deal more for Americans to seek the German universities than it did later. It was not a fad; it was an honest pursuit after German cultural influences. American scholars at that time were just coming to realize that a higher development in American culture needed the infusion of new ideas and ideals. The depth and beauty of German thought was coming into its own, and advanced scholars were trying to become imbued with its spirit by entering

1. The Evangelist, Feb. 5, 1863.

the German universities, then in large measure the centers of the world's highest culture. In 1820 the statesman and scholar, Edward Everett had returned from Germany bringing new life with him; but it is of even greater significance that a theologian should visit the German universities, the seats of rationalism in religious thought and life. The necessity of an introduction of Germany's culture into America must have made a deep impression upon Robinson, for upon his return he began the publication of the Biblical Repository, which at once became the chief exponent of German theological and philosophical thought. His wife proved of the utmost assistance to him in interpreting and translating many of the German contributions to the magazine.

It was hard for Talvj to decide to leave Germany, for in so doing she was abandoning a circle of the highest culture and refinement, and circumstances in which she was able to pursue, unhampered, the studies she most enjoyed, to enter new circles and circumstances without national characteristics of culture; indeed, she was about to enter a land which, because of the stress and strain of new settlement and political development, was almost lacking in elements of culture. In a letter to Jakob Grimm, in which she introduced Edward Robinson to him, she said, "I do not deny that it has cost me a long and bitter struggle, and that even now I think I have not overcome either the pain of separation from all that has been dear to me, or the pain over the loss of my beloved mother-tongue. .....it seems to me as if all that pertains to my fatherland is again as precious, since I have made my decision."[1] An awakening literary jealousy of her work, finding vent

1. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 357.

in literary criticism that was at times spiteful, did much, however, to reconcile her to leaving Germany. Some criticised her for not writing in Latin, claiming that the use of the vernacular detracted in a measure from the scholarliness of her work. Her intellectual strength, which gained not only the respect but also the admiration and approval of some of Germany's greatest men, aroused the envy of less gifted women. Löher remarks: "The women said one could hear the scratch, scratch of her pen throughout the whole town; and this pen was in the hands of a young woman of less than thirty years, upon whom noted men even lavished approving words of praise."[1] The apparently worse than negative reaction of the Wars of Liberation seemed, moreover, to annihilate all her hopes for Germany's future. This severing of her closest motives for remaining in her fatherland culminated in the death of her beloved parents; her father's in 1827 at Lauchstedt, her mother's in 1828 presumably at Halle. Although, as we have noted, she became the wife of Edward Robinson in August of 1828, they did not go to America until two years later. During only a portion of these intervening two years they remained in Halle, for they spent an autumn in Switzerland, a winter in Paris, and a summer in Italy. In other ways, too, they were eventful; for between 1828 and 1830 she had become wife, mother, and orphan. During the seven years preceding her coming to America she had lost a brother, a sister, and both parents. She felt her loss deeply when she said, "For seven years shock after shock has come to me, and even if I now possess new conditions of tenderest love, it seems, nevertheless, as if all of my memories lie buried."[2]

1. Franz von Löher, Beilage z. a. Zeitung.
2. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 359.

Her first home in America was in Andover, where Edward Robinson now occupied the chair of Biblical Literature at the Andover Seminary. She did not quickly adjust herself to her new surroundings,for political and religious interests held sway in all companies; and she withdrew for a time to her own family circle and lived for it alone. Gradually, however, she began to find leisure again for literary investigation and soon, by her interest in America, in its industry, its history, its natives, its language, and its literature, she formed a link, as it were, between German and American culture. She brought from her native land the idea of universality, and in all the articles and reviews written during her life here, it was one which she emphasized prominently. She worked as few other writers have done for the adjustment of the two languages, German and English. Jakob Grimm foresaw her power to do this for in a letter written to her just before she sailed, he spoke of the valuable benefits to be derived from a more intimate relation to the English literature in which she would soon find herself. Unnoticed but with effect she labored always to inculcate respect for the German name in the new world; wherever she could she urged young Americans to study at the German universities; and she used her influence always to find for German fugitives, invariably men of education, positions as teachers.[1] With an interest and mental energy peculiar to her, she began very shortly after her arrival in America, a study of America's one romantic element, the Indian, transferring, as it were, her scientific investigation and study to the red race from the Servian. She saw in the life and customs of all original peoples the seed of present growth and the plant of future development. She perceived behind the

1. Idea from Löher.

painted and savage exterior, the real man. She realized, as many of us do not, that in order to penetrate to the real motives and ambitions of a people, we must seek them in its language, for language is the outgrowth and development of the life of a people, and not a mere artificial commodity made to the order of its convenience or necessities.

In 1831 Edward Robinson established the Biblical Repository, to which during the space of four years he was the chief contributor. Mrs. Robinson's first resumption of literary work took the form of contributions to this magazine. In speaking of her papers in the Repository, which were collected and translated by C. von Olberg in 1837, Jakob Grimm said, "It is a work which bears the stamp of strong fundamental knowledge."

In 1833 they moved to Boston, where she helped her husband with the publication of a Lexicon of the Greek Testament. Here she became acquainted with Karl Follen and his talented wife, to whom she has testified her gratitude for the inspiration of a renewed interest in philological studies. Her extensive linguistic ability made her peculiarly fitted to carry out a piece of work Follen had previously considered - the introduction of German popular poetry into America; and at his request she proceeded with the task, one as yet scarcely initiated although Follen had already succeeded in getting Longfellow, John Quincy Adams, Bancroft, Prescott, Channing, Parker, and others interested in German philosophy and literature. Mrs. Robinson came as his great co-worker in extending this interest. From time to time her articles on "Popular Songs of the Nations of the Teutonic Races" appeared in the North American Review, and in 1840 they were put into book

form under the title of Charakteristik der Volkslieder.

In 1837, following her husband's appointment to the Union Theological Seminary in New York, she left her circle of friends at Boston. Immediately after entering upon this work at the new institution Robinson went on a tour of investigation to Europe, Palestine, and Egypt, accompanied abroad by his wife, who, however, remained in Hamburg, Leipzig, and Dresden. During her stay in Germany she published more works dealing with popular songs. With the knowledge, spirit, and keenness of a German professor, and the intuition and sympathy of a woman, she seemed to possess a peculiar aptitude for such studies as this. In the naivetè of primitive songs, she traced the very life-springs of a nation. There is no question but that her already broad interest in mankind was broadened and enlarged through these studies, which in their scope touched upon the songs of France, Russia, Slavonia, Spain, Germany, Scandinavia, England, Scotland, and America. Through her critical essay on Ossian not Genuine in 1840, she brought to a close, at least for many years to come, the dispute over the genuineness of Macpherson's Ossian, which Samuel Johnson had done so much to intensify. Her essay called forth a storm of contradiction, which, however, was totally incapable of destroying its effectiveness.

Upon her husband's return from Palestine in 1840, Mrs. Robinson returned to America. Her home in New York became the rendevouz for educated people, where some of America's most famous literary men and women met in social intercourse. A few personal letters to Mrs. Robinson, found among the remnants of books and papers now in possession of her grandson Edward Robinson of New

York, show that among others Bancroft, Bryant, Bayard Taylor, Olmstead, and Kohl were her frequent guests.[1] With such an able, though altogether modest, woman as hostess to the educated men and women of her day, we can easily realize the charm of conversation, the brilliancy of ideas exchanged, the unconscious and subtle influence of one great mind upon another which must have taken place within her walls; in winter at her New York residence, in summer at her picturesque seat among the Catskill mountains.

In her own intellectual history these acquaintanceships, some of them transient, others enduring, counted for much. A friendship with Frederick von Raumer, the German historian, who visited her in her New York home in 1844, gave her the idea of entering the field of history. This idea was strengthened by Albert Gallatin and other of her friends in the city. It was just the time when a great movement was on foot to collect the sources of American history. The task appealed to her inclination to delve into national pasts. Societies for such study were being formed everywhere, and to one such of which Albert Gallatin was president, both Robinson and his wife belonged. As her share in the programs Mrs. Robinson wrote several historical sketches; among them was "Die Geschichte des Kapitän John Smith", which was published in 1847 in Raumers Historisches Taschenbuch. This same year appeared one of her principal works, a history of the colonization of New England from 1607 to 1692. Critics differ as to the significance of this latter production; but the gist of contemporary comment as gathered from newspapers and magazines of 1847, will be presented in a later chapter. Her literary-historical works were in many

1. Unfortunately a fire destroyed almost all of the manuscripts left by Mr. & Mrs. Robinson.

respects epoch making, even if her purely historical works were not. Duyckink says of them, "Her style is simple and she is unsurpassed and practical in her learned and scientific representation of such literary historical subjects as 'Popular Poetry of the Slavic Nations' etc. She also possesses the advantage of a finely poetic culture, which because of her love for the original makes it possible for her to translate with especial completeness into German or English verse."[1]

Her friendships with Washington Irving, which dated from 1846, inclined her again toward the field of poetry. Her development in this field of activity, however, does not stand out prominently. Her poetry, while it cannot be said to have detracted in any respect from the brilliancy of her work, cannot on the other hand be said to have added anything. Aside from her folksongs, but fifteen poems have been published. These occupy a very small portion of the book entitled Gesammelte Novellen, published by her daughter after Talvj's death. We know from what she herself said or implied that she destroyed many of her first efforts. Between the years 1826 and 1845 we find no poems at all; for 1845 we have a single verse, written in her daughter's album; while the next which appears in this small group of fifteen bears the date 1850. We cannot be sure that these poems in any way represent the sum total of her poetic work, but they are the only collection which has ever been published, We may perhaps conclude rightly, that poetry as such was in no way a congenial form of expression for her during her life in America until after her friendship with Irving and even after that time not an apt instrument. At this we cannot

1. Cyclopedia of American Literature, vol. ii, p.169.

be surprised, however, if we consider the fact that hers was the philological and scientific type of mind, and not the philosophical and emotional type.

Aside from her original works during her life in America, she made several translations of the results of her husband's investigations. Among them, perhaps the two most important were Neue biblische Forschungen in Palestine and Physische Geographie des heiligen Landes. The latter was made, in 1865, amid greatly changed surroundings, for after the death of her husband in 1863 she returned to her beloved Germany and Europe where she spent the rest of her life. During these years she lived at various times in Berlin, Italy, Strassburg, Karlsruhe, and Hamburg. She died at the latter place on April thirteenth, 1870; her body was brought to America and buried in New York. As was the case with her husband, she also suffered much during her last years from cataracts upon both eyes.

Her circle of friends was large both in America and in Europe. In Germany it numbered K. L. W. Heyse, Franz Bopp, Wilhelm and Jakob Grimm, Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt, Frederick Raumer, and Goethe; in America, Bayard Taylor, William Cullen Bryant, Frederick Olmstead, George Bancroft, J. G. Kohl, Washington Irving, Edward Everett, E. A. Duyckinck, and Margaret Fuller; in Russia, Kaschin and Makarow; in Servia, Dawidowitsch and Miklosch; in Italy, Manzoni, Emiliani, Gindici, and Madame Ferrucci; in England, Carlyle. She always held a remarkable sway over youthful minds, both in inspiring them to definite literary productions, and in infusing into them a measure of her own ambition and energy. She was the inspiration behind Hermann Kriege's Die Väter der

Republik, his George Washington, Thomas Payne, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Her husband was indebted to her for a large part of his knowledge of the German language and its literature. I feel I have not judged wrongly when I say that much of the work in the Biblical Repository during her husband's editorship may be attributed to her either directly or indirectly. And in all her books there is a wealth of cultural thought expressed which seems to bear the stamp of her keenly scientific brain and sympathetically sensitive appreciation of all liberal and idealistic tendencies.

She was deeply religious, for, as Löher says, "How could this truly strong spirit have lived and succeeded without a deep childlike faith in God and his providence?"[1] She objected to being considered "eine gelehrte Frau" only, for this was not the goal of her ambition. She strove to awaken love and confidence, to sympathize always where sympathy would avail, to help the needy and distressed, to be a wife to her husband and a mother to her children in the true sense. Hers was a nature entirely free from pettiness and untruth, a nature thoroughly feminine. She loved youth and was perfectly at home with young people. Unlike many women, she took a keen interest in the broader political movements in Germany and America. This interest, however, did not lead her at any time to assume an attitude which could be criticised as bold and unwomanly. Indeed, in almost every personal reference to her by contemporary critics the terms 'modest' and 'tender' appear. She knew a woman's place, and although endowed with unusual powers she held herself always within the boundaries of her worthy station.

1. Löher, Beiträge z. a. Zeitung.

A glimpse of her attitude toward her home and its duties draws us even more closely to her. It was a matter of pride with her that she never turned her attention to her writing or study until she had put her house in order for the day. A word of praise from her husband about her skill as a housewife meant more to her than any praise as a writer. But that he valued her literary skill we also know from what she herself says of him: "Robinson belongs, indeed quite fortunately, to the few men who know how to appreciate a lively interest in art and acience, even among women; and he would rather arouse my enthusiasm toward literary activity than hold me back from it."[1]

From a description on a passport granted to her in 1851 at the age of 54 years, we learn that she was five feet, one and one-half inches tall, had blue eyes, blond hair, and a fair complexion. Her husband was a man six feet tall, dark of hair and skin. Two children, Edward and Mary survived them. The former was an officer in the Civil War at the time of his father's death. He resigned his position, however, and accompanied his mother to Germany, where he filled the office of consul at Strassburg and Hamburg during the years 1865 to 1875. In the latter year he returned to America, and practiced law in New York City until his death in 1894. Two sons and one daughter at present represent the family, Edward Robinson of the firm of Ruggles and Robinson, Engineers in New York City, and Hope Robinson Hitchcock and Hermann Robinson, who reside in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. Mary Robinson, Talvj's daughter died in New York City in 1906. She attained considerable prominence in music, being a composer as well as a finished pianist.

1. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 357.

In all justice Mrs. Robinson may be called one of the most important writers of her sex. Goethe spoke of her as one "who had the heart of a woman, but the brain of a man."[1] Her daughter pays her a beautiful eulogy in the introduction to Gesammelte Novellen. In part she says, "The blessing of these characteristics-most loving mother and wife, most careful and cautious housewife - fell upon those who were nearest to her, those whose very existence was woven into hers. They knew best her warm loving heart, her conscientiousness, her stern feeling of duty, the entire lack of self-seeking in her nature. To them she disclosed her deeply religious sentiment, her reverence for God, and her complete resignation to His will in order to attain to man's highest effort. They knew, too, that the faults, from which naturally she was not free, were a part of her temperament and not her character, and that the shadows cast by these faults served only to intensify the light of her character. And they are the ones who have lost the most, and whose loss can never be replaced."[2]

1. Cyclopedia of British and American Authors.
2. Gesammelte Novellen, Introduction, p. xxviii and xxix.

CHAPTER II.

Literary Activity Prior to Coming to America.

As stated in the preceding chapter, an excessive modesty prevented Talvj from giving to the public her earliest work, which was in the form of poems. From a similar motive, she brought out her translations of two of Sir Walter Scott's novels, Old Mortality and Black Dwarf under the assumed name Ernst Berthold. However, it was not until her criticisms began to appear from time to time in the Literarisches Conversationsblatt that she really entered the literary field. These, as before, appeared anonymously, but under the general title "Briefe eines Frauenzimmers über einige neue Erscheinungen der Literatur." In the 'Blätter' for 1822 there are three articles by her; and in them reference is made to preceding as well as to following articles. However, from the fact that as early as 1823 she became interested in Servian folk-songs, we may infer that after that date her ventures into the field of criticism were few.

Pustkuchen, a preacher and writer of the first half of the nineteenth century had attracted no inconsiderable attention by his captiously critical attitude toward Goethe's Wilhelm Meister. The tone of hostility toward Goethe which pervaded his books, uniting a harsh judgment of both his personality and works, excited the resentment of a hero-worshipping public. Talvj's review of Pustkuchen's two works, "Über Wilhelm Meisters Tagebuch vom Verfasser der Wanderjahre, and Über die Gedanken einer frommen Gräfin, which had appeared in 1821 and 1822 respectively, shows a keen and just intellect. Her whole examination is conducted in the spirit

of the eighteenth century essayists and reviewers who read into the meaning of the word 'criticism' a much fuller significance than we now ascribe to it; and she, like they, assumes in the duty of the critic two functions, one to separate the genuine from the non-genuine, and a second to judge or set a standard for the beautiful. It is unfortunate that Talvj's excursions into the department of literary criticism were not more numerous after taking up her work in America, especially in view of the fact that so much of America's literature bore the stamp of a labored and artificial imitation. The check on such literature, naturally, is just such broad-based literary criticism as that in which Talvj had exhibited her breadth of mind, acuteness, and good judgment. To illustrate, in introducing her critical review of Über Wilhelm Meister Tagebuch she says: "There appear among the expressions of this clever diary many which seem to me to be false, many distorted, and then, too, many which are significant." She adds, "Among all of them I find a truly ingenious connection and consequence of an excellent thinker, self-reliant almost to stubbornness sometimes."[1] She then proceeds to analyze the piece part by part. But she does not stop with mere analysis; she draws comparisons and makes suggestions. She evinces in a letter to Jakob Grimm a desire to be accorded just the sort of criticism she herself tries to give. She says among other things, ".....in this case I wish to hear, fearlessly given, the voice of truth only."[2]

After discussing the weaknesses and deficiencies of Pustkuchen's book, Talvj turns to a consideration of its various

1. Conversationsblatt, No. 17, 1822.
2. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 348.

merits. "How gladly", she says, "I pass to the excellent, the new, and the beautiful, which form so predominant a part of this book." In such a criticism an author cannot feel that the view taken of his work by his critic has been colored by personal prejudice. It must appeal to him as the honest and unbiased opinion of an acute and trained intellect; instead of antagonizing, it must spur him on to greater effort. We are told, or rather she tells us herself in her short autobiography, that she enjoyed this kind of work. It was a challenge to her ever-present inclination to investigate and to connect causes and effects.

In her review and criticism of Über die Gedanken einer frommen Gräfin, which appeared in No. 90 of the Conversationsblatt for 1822, she brings out very strongly a conviction which we find her maintaining throughout her life. Pustkuchen had expressed in this work a characteristically pessimistic sentiment: "Thus man torments himself to become religious and for his efforts wins nothing but empty illusion..... My duty is eternal love and still I cannot attain to it." Talvj answers, "No one who recognizes the sublime happiness of inner faith will be able to read these gloomy words without deep seriousness and painful sadness. If they were true, if all our efforts and our strivings, if our deepest conclusions were in vain, if the right physician did not lend a willing ear to our burning desires, if we should have to wait until he came to us, in order to lead us through his grace, how insignificant, how depressing, how humiliating this human life would be."

In this criticism a chance but deeply serious allusion to herself as an "ungelehrtes Frauenzimmer" bears witness to her possession of a sense of unworthiness for the office of a literary

arbiter. In a way the term 'ungelehrt' was true, for she lacked the formal preparation found within academic walls, and had enjoyed little even of a tutor's training. However, none but herself would have called her 'ungelehrt'. The scope of her interests was wonderful, and her scholarship in each of her varied fields was far above the average. She speaks also of the 'limitations of her capabilities'. Because of this very consciousness of her limitations, what she says and the way she says it appear absolutely genuine, and in being genuine assume the character of the honest conviction of an unbiased mind trained to think for and through itself.

The third article in the Conversationsblatt for 1822 is a review of Grillparzer's Das goldene Vliess, in which the critical element is greatly outweighed by a resumé of the subject matter,- a rendition of the story in miniature. A few years later, in 1826, she met Grillparzer at the home of Goethe in Weimar.

The most important piece of work done by Talvj during this period, and indeed, according to the suffrage of many, the most important literary achievement of her lifetime, was her Volkslieder der Serben. As early as 1756 a Dalmatian, by name Kacic-Miosic, made a collection of popular ballads of Slavonic peoples, analogous to that which Bishop Percy did for England and Scotland in 1765, when he published his Religues. In 1814 Wuk Stephanovitsch Karadschitsch published a four volume collection at Leipzig, notable in that it inspired Jakob Grimm to give to the German people, in the version of a German poet, the first of these songs that they had read since the time of Herder. Through Jakob Grimm, moreover, Wuk Stephanovitsch was brought into friendly relation with Goethe, and was able to induce him, in turn, to entertain a lively interest in

Slavonic poetry. Goethe published some of Wuk's translations, and some of Grimm's as well, in his Kunst und Altertum. Finally, Jakob Grimm's public recommendation of the Servian popular poetry, aroused the curiosity of Theresa von Jakob, or Talvj, and she began the study of Servian, which, probably because of a strong foundation for it which she had in her knowledge of Russian she mastered with unusual rapidity. By 1826 she had translated and published two volumes of Volkslieder der Serben. She had heard that Goethe was taking a decided interest in the Servian literature, and so she ventured, despite an almost overpowering timidity, to write to him and tell him of her proposed work. At the time she sent her first letter to him, she also sent a few of the songs she had already translated.[1] Goethe received her letter and translations in the most cordial manner, and from that time until the completion of her work she maintained a most interesting and profitable correspondence with him. Three times during the period, she met him personally at Weimar and discussed the work with him. It had always been Goethe's conviction that in order to arouse the proper atmosphere for the reception of popular poetry, the songs or poems must be presented in a mass and not in isolated form. Only in this way, among so much of limitation, poverty, and superficiality could its accompanying richness, breadth, and depth be realized. It is no more fair to judge a nation by a few selections of popular songs than it is to judge an author by one or two of his works. The fact that Talvj was aiming to present her translations in this collected form pleased Goethe very much, and he encouraged her in most cordial phrases. In speaking of her work in Kunst und Altertum he said,

1. April 12, 1824.

"In this matter, as things now stand, nothing could be more pleasing than that a young woman of peculiar talent and fitness for handling the Slavonic language, acquired by a previous residence in Russia, should conclude to make a study of the Servian, devoting herself to this treasure of song with remarkable zeal..... She translates without external incentive, from an inner inclination and judgment.....and she will arrange in a volume as many of the poems as one needs in order to acquaint himself with this extraordinary poetry."[1] Goethe's approval was the spark of stimulation Talvj needed. Two motives lay back of her work, one to lessen the sting of her grief over the recent death of a brother, and the other to please Goethe whom she loved above all poets.

Jakob Grimm criticised her work as being too much a germanizing of the Servian. When, at her request for his criticism, he sent her this statement, "I do not understand why much or all should be germanized, and I believe that our own language is weakened in the process,"[2] she replied with rather astonishing frankness; "Indeed,if the folk-songs do not belong among that which is to be germanized,why should the fables, so closely related to them, be translated? Whether poetry or prose, it is one and the same."[3] And again she says, "I cannot deny that my idea of a good translation does not harmonize with yours..... I find that the better we know a language, the less it occurs to us to translate it literally."[4] In another reference to her translation she remarks that she has tried to make it as faithful as the entirely different spirit of the two languages will permit,often,for this reason,throwing it into

1. Kunst und Altertum. Weimar Ed. vol. xli - xlii, p. 149.
2. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 348.
3. Ibidem, p. 349.
4. Ibidem, p. 349.

a purely literal form. She has never allowed a simple or strong portrayal in the original to be changed or swallowed up by rhetorical adornment. Goethe studied the translations by both Grimm and Talvj, and then made the following statement: "Grimm's translation in its strict adherence to the original, was for him the most desirable. Inasmuch as he himself was not master of any Slavic dialect he, to a certain extent, approximated the original; thus only could he procure a sympathy for the word-order and rhythm of the Servian songs. His aim was to lead back to the original text, but this more scholarly attitude was not a feasible one for the more general public, whose aim was appreciation rather than study. On the other hand, Talvj's more free and happy translation was able to make the most vigorous hero-legends and the tenderest love songs of this foreign nation the common property of Germany."[1]

In October of 1826 Talvj met Jakob Grimm in Cassel. His attitude toward her at first seemed to lack the enthusiasm which later marked it so strongly. Perhaps he who was then an authority in the field of folk-lore and myth had an apprehensive suspicion that hers was the work of a dilettante; and what seemed like a jealous impatience of her intrusion upon his interests was in reality the resentment of a highminded scholar for anything which obscured the truth. At any rate, his attitude later became one of decided admiration both for the woman and her ability. This changed view-point was shown twice,- once by his cordial expression of approbation when her work appeared in December, once by the expression of a concrete act of kindness and deference. In 1837, when

1. R. Steig, Goethe und die Brüder Grimm, p. 180.

her husband set out upon his tour of investigation to Palestine, she returned to Germany, spending a part of the time during the next three years in Dresden. While here, Jakob Grimm unexpectedly paid her a visit and discussed his plan for a 'Wörterbuch' with her, in regard to which he was even then on his way to Saxony.

A letter from Professor Jakob, a cousin of Talvj's, to Grimm contains this acknowledgment, "You introduced the Servian poems of my cousin to the public in such a friendly way."[1] Jakob Grimm's approval, no doubt, meant much, but Goethe's cordial and lively interest was really the chief factor in assuring to the book the instantaneous favor with which it met. I am thoroughly convinced that the book would, if left to rest upon its own merits, ultimately have attained to the same appreciation; but without such adventitious aid the process would have been a slow one. We must remember that Talvj was comparatively unknown in the field of literature, so that the name of the author was not 'open sesame' to popularity. She quite naturally wished to dedicate the book to Goethe. He accepted the compliment with pleasure, but did not feel competent to comply with her request that he write a preface; however he recommended it to the public through his Kunst und Altertum. The dedication took the form of three beautiful verses, the last of which is especially worth quotation:

"Drum, hoher Meister, die zwiefach Dein eigen,
Die Blätter reich ich Dir, und zage nicht!
Denn wenn sie heute sich der Menge zeigen,
Dein Wink rief sie ermuthigend ans Licht.
Vielleicht, dass Manchem ihre Räthsel schweigen,
Dass unverstanden ihre Stimme spricht:
Dein Beifall gnügt und bürgt, sie offenbare
So Dichtrisch=Schönes, wie das Menschlich=Wahre."

1. Preussische Jahrbücher, vol. lxxvi, p. 362.

In speaking with Eckermann on January 18, 1825 Goethe said, "I rejoice over this intellectual woman in Halle, who has introduced us into the Servian world with a man's strength of mind. The poems are excellent! There are some among them which are worthy of being placed beside the 'Song of Songs', and that means a great deal."[1]

In Kunst und Altertum we find the work mentioned as one of the three beautiful gifts to German poetic literature. In order of greatness, beauty, and worth Goethe mentions: Serbische Lieder übersetzt von Talvj, Lettische Lieder von Rhesa and Frithiof durch Amalia von Helvig - Aus dem Schwedischen. In another reference, again, she is mentioned with Jakob Grimm and Herr Gerhard. To no one of these three writers does Goethe give preeminence in this field. Wuk Stephanovitsch and Kopitar both gave her valuable assistance by suggesting to her certain of those peculiarities of the Servian language for which none but a native-born could possess a real sympathy and appreciation. That the work met with the approbation not merely of both these Servian scholars, but of others as well, we may gather from a letter which she received from some of the young Servian students who were studying in Germany. What they wrote to her is of especial interest at the present time: "The Servian people, robbed of every interest in the activities and progress of the educated world, were long known among the nations blessed with a national culture, as a nation of slaves, often as a nation of robbers and murderers. To thebearers of Europe's civilization, the noble conceptions which nourished and inspired the Servians were unknown. Instead of favor the nation acquired disfavor, instead of sympathy, scorn. ... To you, O noble woman, and

1. Gespräche mit Eckermann. 1825.

to your powerful mind belongs the honor of having secured for our people protection and refuge.... You have heralded the worth of the occident. What a sublime feeling for you has sprung up in the hearts of a nation which has been placed on the stage of humanity not through its own material might, but through your ability and effort. Receive thanks, then, from us to whom your noble fatherland, Prussia, has so hospitably opened the doors of its educational institutions. Your worthy name shall be enrolled with respect and honor among the list of friends of that intellectual progress, which you are advancing so wisely."[1]

Talvj accomplished in part what Herder in his Volkslieder wished might yet be accomplished for the national poetry of the less civilized older peoples. As yet this poetry seemed veiled in darkness. Speaking of her work in this connection, Menzel said, "He has gathered together in two volumes the most excellent love and epic songs of that nation. If he has not given them to us with their whole natural atmosphere, still he has made us acquainted with the very kernel of an entirely peculiar folklore."[2] (Menzel was one of those who thought 'Talvj' was a man.) It was a surprise to the German people to be brought to realize that such a wealth and depth of feeling could exist in a nation which had always been looked upon as barbarian. Whatever Goethe had done previous to this was with isolated songs, and she, probably better than any one else, realized how impossible it was to arouse an interest and appreciation by means of isolated examples. The "Lamentation of Asan Agas", which he had translated some years before, had been received favorably, but it neither prepared the way for nor anticipated the un-

1. From an unpublished clipping found among her papers.
2. Literatur Blatt No. 77, Sept. 26, 1826.

usual appreciation of Servian literature which followed the publication of Talvj's book. Menzel credited to 'Herr Talvj' a deep natural sympathy for this so called barbarian people, which enabled him to give these songs the charm of Ossian and Homer.

In these unspoiled sons of nature the Germans are brought face to face with an old sacred strength and purity of heart little dreamed of. Through all their ferocious wildness there runs an almost incredible trace of mildness and tender honor. Theirs is the naive expression of a feeling not yet restrained by consciousness of civilization, or by the forms of a stilted and artificial language. The Servian and New Greek songs bear some similarities, in as much as both peoples were on approximately the same plane of cultural development, and were for centuries neighbors and fellow-servants under the same tyranny.

A short history of the Servians, which successfully fulfills its design of creating an interest in the songs themselves, constitutes an introduction to the first volume. A comparison of Talvj's translation with a literal translation of one of the longer songs convinced both Goethe and Menzel that her versions moved with a swing and smoothness quite in accord with the original. Both were free from even the restraint of rhyme. Critics have said that Talvj's and Goethe's translations seem, almost, to have been the work of one person. There is a naturalness about the shorter poems of love, longing, fidelity, and grief which effectually excludes all sentimentality. The charm of truly artless spontaneity as attractive as the charm of childish naivete hovers around them. The first volume contains fifty-four poems of the lyrical variety, followed by ten longer poems, or 'Romanzen', depicting life within the

family circle and on the field of battle. A peculiar characteristic marks all these longer poems; the mother and brother play a more important role, it seems, than the father. Blood relationship, again, as in all the earlier nations is a sacred tie. The volume closes with two long poems, of which one is built about the heroic figure of Marko, while the other culminates in the battle of Amselfeld. Marko is comparable to the German Siegfried, the Greek Achilles, the Scandinavian Baldur, the Ossian Oscar, and like them all succumbs to the irresistible power of fate.

After the appearance of the first volume in 1825, repeated complaints came that Talvj had not given to the public enough of the shorter, so-called female songs; and in the second volume which appeared in 1826, she attempted to satisfy this demand by the inclusion of ninety-two such lyrics. Besides these, other additions to the second volume include thirteen longer poems, twelve legends and epics, another long Marko epic, and five scenes from the last insurrection of the Servians. It was currently believed that Talvj was acquainted with many more songs, and a third volume, which never appeared, was long and confidently awaited by many of her readers; but whether fear of offending the cultivated German ear with a presentation of nature in her natural garb as manifested in a primitive and natural people restrained her from further publication, I have not been able to ascertain. One of her critics suggested that as a possible reason.

Upon her arrival in Berlin, she was received as a writer of recognized ability. Her work had already revived Savigny's interest in Slavic poetry. On every hand she was met with praise and thanks. All this meant much to Talvj, but with this pleasure came

keen sorrow, inasmuch as there no longer existed any occasion for a continuance of her correspondence with Goethe. She says in one of her latest letters to him, "And I am brought to realize with the deepest regret and sorrow how this step (final publication) cuts loose every outer relation with you whom I have honored with all the strength of my soul since my earliest youth."[1] Her last letter to him bears her thanks for two beautiful medallions which Goethe, as we know from his Tagebuch of December 2, 1826, had sent her; medallions, it may be mentioned, of the same kind which he shortly afterwards (1827) presented to Zelter and Grüner - a picture of the Grand Duke on one side and of Goethe and a spread eagle on the other.

And thus ended a chapter in Talvj's literary career which in many respects has no counterpart in her later life. Actuated in part by a desire to please Goethe, in part by a force of mind which one of her critics found comparable to that of a German professor, she had placed in German literature a monument to herself and to the Servian nation.

1. Goethe Jahrbuch, ix, p. 58.

CHAPTER III.

The American Indian -
Translation of Pickering's Indian Languages--
Essay on the Original Inhabitants of North America.

The Indian, always picturesque and interesting, has come to be considered the most romantic element in American history and early American life. He himself has not produced a literature, but his language, his legends, and his songs have been a study for scholars of various nations. In fact, the Indian had a great share in the development of the poetic interest in folksongs which reached such a height in Germany during the latter part of the eighteenth century. In the original poetry of primitive nations men saw the fundamental nature of man manifested far more truly and powerfully than in the poetry of cultivated nations. The theory gained prominence that the Indians were the ten lost tribes, and in consequence there arose an almost feverish interest in their origin; through investigation into which their popular songs and legends came into prominence and attracted some of the greatest scholars of philology and history. Indeed, it was thought that a wonderful discovery had been made when it came to be known that the Indians had poetry.

The theory of the Hebraic origin of the savage races, however, useful as it was in stimulating a literary, philological, and ethnological interest in them, was never clearly or even very plausibly established. Many alternative and conflicting hypotheses were advanced, and out of the whole general controversy there arose a radical disagreement as to the Indian language. To some it was harsh and altogether disagreeable; to others it was mellow, soft

and sonorous. The character of the wilderness tribes, too, became a matter of great dispute. To some they were painted savages, cruel, revengeful, and absolutely devoid of a single genuinely human feeling; to others they were loyal, true, kind, and sincere. A remarkable fact, noticeable in a comparative reading of French, English, and German writers is that, generally speaking, the German attitude was more humane and lenient than that of the other nations. Indeed Duponceau, one of the greatest scholars of the Indian, sums up the attitude of nations other than the German very well in the words, "But who cares for the poor American Indians? They are savages and barbarians and live in the woods; must not their languages be savage and barbarian like them?"[1] But of the Teutonic writers he remarks: "I must take this opportunity to express my astonishment at the great knowledge which the literati of Germany appear to possess of America and of the customs, manners, and languages of its original inhabitants. Strange that we should have to go to German universities to become acquainted with our own country." Before discussing Talvj's peculiar contributions to the subject it may be well to consider what, in general, had been done by the writers of various nations, and in particular by the Germans.

The endeavors of John Eliot, Roger Williams, Cadwallader Colden, Samuel Sagard, and Bryan Edwards to give the Indian language and legends stability and permanence by reducing them to writing must be acknowledged as a substantial effort toward a general dissemination of knowledge concerning such topics. Neither can we overlook the work of Baron de La Hontan, Jonathan Carver, Father Charlevoix, Colonel John Gibson, Dr. Barton, Elias Boudinot and

1. Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania vol. xii,p.367

others. However, the real awakening of an interest in this huge task of preserving the fast disappearing tongues and folk-stories of the savages came through the Germans; and especially the German missionaries, whose great intimacy with the Indians, gained by the close contact of long years of residence among them, inspired a sympathy and understanding which set itself gladly to the labor of recording their language.

As early as 1688 we find in a letter of Pastorius, who studied and worked at the University of Altdorf before coming to America, an account of the Indians of Pennsylvania as he knew them. He said in part: "The Indians, or as I prefer to call them, the forest inhabitants of Pennsylvania, are large and for the most part very muscular..... Of an open mind, the speech is moderate and brief, but of decided worth. They can neither read nor write. Notwithstanding, they are inventive, sly, discreet, earnest, fearless, untiring, and alert, but always exact and honest in business transactions."[1] In the second letter is a list of some of the more common expressions and terms of Indian speech, with their German equivalents. Thus early the Germans made an attempt to become better acquainted with the Indians by means of a knowledge of their language.

The most significant work, with respect to their language and culture however, was done about a century later by Zeisberger and,- more especially - by Heckewelder; and it was this which afforded Talvj much of her source material. It is true that Alexander von Humboldt and Dr. N. H. Julius also rendered her assistance by means of some original folk-lore which they had collected; but

1. Goebel, "Zwei Unbekannte Briefe von Pastorius", German American Annals, August, 1904.

of all the sources mentioned by her, Heckewelder seems to have been the most significant. The great Moravian missionary first became an evangelist to the Indians in 1762, as an assistant to Christian Frederic Post. This venture was not successful, however, and it was not until 1771 that he entered upon his actual career as an evangelist to them. In this year he began his labors as the assistant of the already well-known David Zeisberger, working among the Moravian Indians, first in Pennsylvania and then in Ohio. Almost the entire period of his life from this time forward was filled with dealings with and for the Indians. Nor, ceaselessly active as he was as a teacher and proselyte, was his pen idle. His book on the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations who once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States, appearing in 1819, caused a veritable uproar in the critical world for his attitude differed almost diametrically from that which the majority of writers before him had taken. Many of the judgments passed upon his volume were favorable; many, also, were scathingly condemnatory.

A few of the more prominent phases of Indian life and customs which Heckewelder brought out may be interesting as a background for Talvj's study; for many of her conclusions, although arrived at from an altogether different method of attack, were similar. According to Heckewelder, the complaints which the Indians made against European ingratitude and injustice were long and dismal. They loved to repeat them and always did it with the eloquence of nature, aided by an energetic and comprehensive language whose force our polished idioms could seldom imitate. "Often", he said, "I have listened to these descriptions of their hard sufferings

until I felt ashamed of being a white man."[1] He heard one Indian remark, "I admit that there are good white men, but they bear no proportion to the bad; the bad must be the strongest, for they rule. The white men are not like the Indians, who are only enemies while at war and are friends in peace..... They are not to be trusted."[2] This plaintive indignation Heckewelder found the more appealing from the fact that when the Indians first saw the white men, they considered them superior beings sent by the Great Spirit, and expected to be made happier by their coming. "And yet, for all their abuses," he quotes these injured people, "the white men would always be telling us of their great Book which God had given to them; they would persuade us that every man was good who believed in what the Book said, and every man was bad who did not believe in it. They told us a great many things which they said were written in the good Book, and wanted us to believe it all. We would probably have done so, if we had seen them practice what they pretended to believe and act according to the good words which they told us.... They killed those who believed in their book as well as those who did not."[3]

Heckewelder did not deny the horrors and cruelty of the treatment which the Indians accorded their prisoners of war, but he denied that torture and death were as frequent as many of the writers had maintained.[4] Prisoners were generally adopted by the families of their conquerors in place of lost or deceased relatives or friends. Burning and torturing scarcely ever took place except when

1. Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, vol.xii, p.76.
2. Ibidem, p. 80.
3. Ibidem, p. 188.
4. See Lawson's Journal, p. 197.

a nation had suffered great losses in war, or when wilful and deliberate murders of innocent women and children had occurred. The respect which the simple savages had for old age was remarkable. In a council no young man would presume to offer, unsolicited, one word of advice in the presence of his elders. This very respect, however, so laudable in itself, was sometimes carried to the extreme, and worked to the detriment of the Indians.

In their individual social relations, moreover, Heckewelder pointed out that the aborigines were not quarrelsome, and were always on their guard so as not to offend each other. When one supposed himself hurt or aggrieved by a word which had inadvertently fallen from the mouth of another, he would say to him, "Friend, you have caused me to become jealous of you." When the other explained and said he had no evil intentions all hard feeling ceased. They did not fight with each other, for they said fighting was only for dogs and beasts. The verdict of Boudinot is in full accord with this opinion. "To whom", says Boudinot,"should be attributed the evil passions, cruel practices, and vicious habits to which they are now changed, but to those who first set the example, laid the foundation, and then furnished the continual means for propagating and supporting the evil?"[1]

To the Indians the Almighty Creator was always present as an almost visible reality. With reverence they felt and acknowledged his supreme power. Much like the Greeks and Romans, they believed that lesser gods had charge over the elements. Combined with this worship was an ancestor-worship, which inspired each of them with a hope to rise to fame and glory,- a hope, however, which

1. Memoirs, vol. xii, p. 331.

they could expect to realize only through submission and obedience. In illustration of this religion and of the superstitious and poetic nature of the Indian's, Heckewelder's book contains, besides the accounts of savage life and customs, a great number of native legends and bits of supernatural lore.

In a criticism of Heckewelder's work the North American Review presented the following opinion, one characteristic of the prevalent attitude of the English and the Americans: "The range of thought of our Indian neighbors is extremely limited. Of abstract ideas they are almost wholly destitute. They have no sciences, and their religious notions are confused and circumscribed. They have but little property, less law, and no public offences. They soon forget the past, improvidently disregard the future, and waste their thoughts, when they do think upon the present. The character of all original languages must depend, more or less, upon the wants, means, and occupations, mental and physical, of the people who speak them, and we ought not to expect to find the complicated refinement of polished tongues, among those of our Indians."[1] There were, however, those already - a pitiful minority - who took issue with this sentiment. Duponceau, for example, said, "Alas! if the beauties of the Lenni Lenape language were found in the ancient Coptic or in some ante-diluvian Babylonish dialect, how would the learned of Europe be at work to display them in a variety of shapes, and raise a thousand fanciful theories on that foundation! What superior wisdom, talents and knowledge would they not ascribe to the nations whose idioms were formed with so much skill and method!"[2]

1. North American Review, 1826, p. 79.
2. Memoirs, vol. xii, p. 367.

This, then, was the state of critical opinion in America in regard to the Indians and their language, when Talvj became interested in the various dialects, and in aboriginal culture as manifested in their folklore. Her appearance served, in a measure, as a response to the appeal of B. H. Coates made in closing an address upon the "Origin of the Indian" before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1834. "The occasion is tempting", he said, "to urge the cause of the unhappy aboriginals and must not be neglected. What are the inquiries of abstract research to the claims of living and suffering humanity? It is to woman that we can ever appeal for all that is generous in self-devotion and gentle and lovely in performance. You possess the power to guide and control public opinion. You mould the statesman and the warrior, and convert their cold and cruel calculations into plans of benevolence and humanity. Nothing but woman can bid the demon of avarice to pause in his career. It is to woman, therefore, that I address the cause of the unfortunate beings who have been the subject of this discourse, a race suffering from every ill that can be inflicted by the combined agency of the thirst for land and the thirst for gold. They are still the same people who were so long the faithful allies of Penn; the men who succoured our ancestors and enabled them to form a state."[1]

The first work of Talvj in this new field was a translation into German of John Pickering's Indian Languages of North America, completed in 1834. Her object in beginning this task was to make Pickering's manual accessible to more Germans than it would have

1. Memoirs vol. iii, part ii.

been in its English form; a highly reasonable ambition, for the Germans had heretofore made the most important researches into the Indian language. She summed up the extent to which studies in the Indian tongues had progressed. In Bethlehem, the central point of the Herrenhuters, she said, there was a complete if small library of essays, dictionaries, etc. of various Indian dialects, written by missionaries of the brotherhood and put there to inform the younger members. Unfortunately the work of both Germans and Americans up to this time had fallen into obscurity. A significant step forward had been made when the American Philosophical Society of Sciences in Philadelphia turned their attention to this work in 1816. Massachusetts and Rhode Island followed in 1819. Many writers on the question had not seen anything worthy of study in the Indian language, but like Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt before her, she felt that in a knowledge of the connection of languages lay the key to the world's history.

The great difficulty, she continued, in learning the Indian languages lay in the lack of harmony in the various orthographies used by the grammariars. Men of various nations represented sounds by symbols equivalent only in their respective languages; so that in order to form a conception of the pronunciation one had to refer constantly to the native language of the men who studied and wrote this literature. Herder had recognized another reason for difficulty, a difficulty which was recognized in a great many other primitive languages; the fact that the more life was inherent in a language, the less one thought of restraining it in letters; the more originally it expressed the unassorted sounds of nature,

the less it was susceptible of reduction to written form. And it was almost beyond the power of a foreigner to form the sounds, let alone represent them by letters.[1] Rasles, who spent ten years among the Indians of North America, complained of the fact that, even with the greatest care and attention he was often able to get only half a word. Chaumont, who spent fifty years among the Hurons, complained of their inexpressible accent. Pickering chose the pronunciation of the German letters as the simplest and most useful inasmuch as they were not radically different from the Spanish, Italian, Swedish, and Danish, and, as regards most vowels, agreed with the French. The English seemed built upon caprice more than principle, and so made a mass of superfluous letters necessary.

Pickering said that the original inhabitants of this land possessed a language different in its idioms from all the languages of the known world. Duponceau, who had made a study of all the languages of America from Greenland to Cape Horn, had proved that the manifold forms of human speech which existed in the Eastern Hemisphere did not exist in the Western. One and the same system seemed to run through all of the Indian languages; however, the variations of the objects made it difficult for a knowledge of one to serve as an open gate to all. Duponceau used the term polysynthetic in speaking of the Indian languages.

A prejudice of long standing against the jargons of wild peoples blinded many of the students of language to the fact, which seemed established in Pickering's mind, that the native Americans had a language second to none in richness of idioms. Compare this view with the following of Lawson's,- "Their languages or tongues

1. Herder, Sämtliche Werke von Supan, vol. v.

are so deficient that you cannot suppose that the Indian ever could express themselves in such a flight of stile as authors would have you believe. They are so far from it, that they are but just able to make one another understand what they talk about."[1] In trying to explain such a narrow and uninformed viewpoint, Pickering thought it might be due to a general failure to appreciate the fact that philosophy and science had little to do in the formation of a language. This explanation seems plausible, and indeed logical, in view of such statements as that made by one illiberal and superficial student of language, that the language of the Indians possessed no real grammatical forms because it was not inflected like the Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit. Consequently, judging from the standpoint of its usefulness in assisting in the development of abstract ideas he gave it a low rank among languages. But the falsity of this criticism is apparent from a cursory examination of the inflectional power of various Indian parts of speech. Mattatsch gluppiweque, as Talvj tells us, is equivalent to the Latin "nisi veneris"---.

Matta negates an adverb.

tsch is the sign of futurity with which an adverb is inflected.

gluppiweque is the second person, plural, present subjunctive of the verb.[2]

Certainly these forms show a higher degree of inflection than the English, French, or German. It was with reason that Duponceau's study led him to conclude that, on the whole, the native American's

1. Lawson, An account of the Indian of North Carolina, 1709.
2. Pickering - Indianische Sprachen Amerikas - Talvj, p. 6.

language was rich in words and grammatical forms.

In the construction of their rules of syntax there seemed to exist among the savage dialects the greatest order, method, and regularity. Most of the so-called students of the Indian languages failed to go deep enough into their essential nature to give a fair decision. Heckewelder, the friend of Duponceau, was the first to call the attention of the public to this. At the time he was looked upon by critics as a benevolent ignoramus, and almost as a misrepresenter of a language he had studied for forty years, in the same way that Duponceau was considered an enthusiast whose feelings had runaway with his judgment. Nevertheless, the statements of these two men are easily reinforced by conclusions drawn over a century before. The Indian apostle Eliot in 1666 spoke of the fact that the aborigines possessed the faculty of combining syllables to express various shades of meaning. Because of this system of polysynthesis, as Duponceau called it, logically their vocabulary would be boundless. Roger Williams testified to the fact that the Indian language was not impoverished. In 1648, in describing a little English - Indian dictionary he was publishing, he said: "The English for every Indian word or sentence is in a straight line directly across from the Indian. At times there are two words for the same thing - for their language is extraordinarily rich, and they often have five and six words for one and the same thing!" 1(2)

1. Indianische Sprachen Amerikas, p.11.
2. Zeisberger wrote a complete dictionary of the Iroquois language in three quarto volumes. The first from A to H is unfortunately lost, but the remainder, which is preserved, contains over eight hundred pages. This would show that the Indian languages are not so poor as is generally imagined. (Idea from a note in Heckewelder's book, which has been quoted.)

To an exact translation of this little book by Pickering Talvj added a number of original notes, containing many interesting anecdotes and facts, besides explanations of the text itself. In these notes she gathered together the various philological explanations of all the greatest students of the Indian language,- Duponceau, Heckewelder, Zeisberger, Vater, Louis Cass, Charlevoix, and Roger Williams. The fifth note is especially interesting as illustrating the cultural nature of Talvj's investigations. The Cherokees, at the time of her early residence in America, were becoming quite civilized, and in the process were offering an interesting field for a study of cultural development, especially in the origin and growth of a written language. She translated for her German readers a letter from Elias Boudinot, himself a Cherokee on his father's side, to W. Woodbridge, the editor of Annals of Education. In this letter the development of the alphabet was described, an alphabet whose simplicity and directness were such, as she said, that a child could learn to speak and read it within a few days. Its content is of unusual interest, while as a contribution to the history of languages it is very valuable.

Talvj's second work with the Indians dealt with their folk-lore and is contained in her book entitled Charakteristik der Volkslieder, a discussion of which is reserved until the chapter on "Popular Poetry". Her research work on this phase of Indian culture did not take the shape of a personal investigation among the Indians themselves, but rather that of a very thorough examination of all the available reports of the explorers, colonists, and missionaries of various nations. Among the sources thus probed were Heckewelder, Alexander von Humboldt, Wilhelm von Humboldt,

Kranz, Julius, Martius, Carver, Williams, Dunne, and Charlevoix. Among other considerations, she confronted the same question which had confronted practically all other students of the private life of the red-men; why did they produce practically no poetry? Their life and customs possessed poetic elements, their language was, in a measure, well adapted to poetic expression, and their surroundings were romantic to a degree always picturesque and often sublime. Her conclusions with regard to this subject were peculiarly original. It must be admitted, she said, that of all uncivilized peoples the American Indians in their original condition stand out the most distinctively poetic. The African races are either rough barbarians, or harmless children unable to approach the boundaries of an intellectual nonage. The uncivilized peoples of Asia, on the other hand, are enslaved by despotism; while the mountain dwellers and Nomads who alone are free bear a certain resemblance to the warlike Indians,- a resemblance, to be sure, modified by various local conditions. The nationality of the Indians seems to harmonize with their surroundings more than in the case of other uncivilized peoples. Their misdeeds appear rather the natural outgrowth of an immaturity of spiritual development than evidence of innate wickedness. Their religion is the religion of nature, wild, free, devoutly poetic- for they are pantheists, and invest God with the form of the natural surroundings in which they live.

That the spiritual condition of the aborigines was undeveloped, she brought out clearly by the following analysis: The Indians classified all objects as animate and inanimate. Every animal had to them a soul and a claim to immortality. Yet while nature was the object of their reverence, still their belief in

her powers was not materialism. Many of their superstitious sayings, handed down secretly from father to son, were without doubt as childish and absurd as the sayings of other uncivilized peoples; but many among them had also a wonderful depth and meaning. The Indians viewed the living world as a great body whose members were all subject to the same laws of birth and growth, endurance and release. The earth was to them a common mother, who carried within her the seed of all life, and from whom everything that existed received its first form. Thus was it decreed by the great and good spirit, the father of men, of animals, and of plants. The regions below the earth were still peopled with many lower races. The Delaware Indians would not eat a rabbit or a mole, for some soul might be contained therein, retarded in its development; and they would have no way of telling whether or not it was related to them. Their ancestors called the rattlesnake grandfather, and neither could be induced by any price to kill it themselves nor would allow white men to slay it. This idea of their relationship to animals was shown in their tribe names, Wolf, Bear, Tortoise, Eagle. The superstitious fear of the owl among some of the tribes, and the belief in the significance of the song and flight of certain birds came, no doubt, from the same source. Similar bonds connected them with the whole living world. Among many tribes even the stars were considered members of a family.

One of the features among the customs of the tribes which struck Talvj as being highly poetic was their tendency to use specific instead of general names. We will agree with her, I think, that poetry has been lost when descriptions become general and vague; the more specific and individual the terms of expression,

the more graphic and clear the picture. With such a treasure of poetic material lying within the inmost nature of the Indians, she felt that strong counter-elements must have been at work to prevent the production of poetry and to make what they had produced in the way of songs and short stories so meager and uninteresting. The Indians to her were an example of a poetic temperament without poetic expression. Talvj cited with some exceptions in opinion the statement given by Albé Clavigero of the poetry of the old Mexican Indians - a statement differing in many respects from the one ordinarily presented. "The language of the Aztecs", he said, "was bright, pure, and pleasing, full of pictures and recurrent images of the most attractive objects in nature, such as flowers, trees, and rivers. But the flattering hues of the Abbé's picture were dimmed by his failure to offer proof. Abbé Molina, again, described the poetry of the Araucana Indians in similarly glowing terms, but such descriptions, Talvj thought, were based on what the poetry of these tribes theoretically should have been, and not on what it really was. In reality, Talvj felt that they were not poetic largely because they were a people in whom the passions were stronger than the imagination. Intense passions were never productive of poetry and, when filled with these passions, the Indians were fairly robbed of their human nature, and took on the aspect of a fiend. As to their skill in the use of metaphors, it was rather the outgrowth of their method of living than an outgrowth of the imagination. Their metaphors were taken immediately out of nature, in which they had more confidence than in the realm of the abstract, the realm from which so many educated people obtain their metaphorical expressions. The innumerable traditions of the Indians did

not show many traces of imagination.

The love for solitude which the Indians possessed seemed to spring from their love of independence and not from an inclination to cultivate the imagination. Only when they had cast off all bonds of companionship did they consider themselves absolutely free. Wilhelm von Humboldt told of a tribe in South America which possessed this trait to such an extent that even the children at times left their parents for four or five days, and wandered about in the forests, sustaining themselves by herbs and roots of trees. Thus deeply ingrained in their souls was the love of independence.

The Indians, again, continues Talvj, were by nature reserved and not at all prone to disclose their emotions, a fact which militated against the production of lyric poetry. Among themselves the redmen were not a gloomy, secretive people, as they appeared to the white men. Before others they seemed to be completely absorbed in themselves and given up to melancholy. All who had had an opportunity of observing them when among their own people, and when not disturbed by suspicious fears, described them as extraordinarily talkative and cheerful, and full of a certain dry satirical wit. But Talvj doubts whether their talk was ever of a very sensible nature.

Still another element which, in Talvj's opinion, worked against the production of poetry, was the absence of the passion of love among the Indians; an absence as to which, however, she admits there was still some disagreement among writers. Generally speaking, the Indians undoubtedly were not demonstrative. A number of travelers agreed on the possession by the savages of a certain tender regard and affection for the children, but the general atti-

tude toward the wife was one of indifference. Their friendships were based not so much on the principles of affection as on the principles of honor and duty. Talvj would not have us think that the Indians were incapable of the tenderer emotions, but they were not dominated by them. Perhaps this explains an apparent absence of jealousy among them. Two of the love songs which she succeeded in obtaining through the kindness of Dr. Julius will suffice to show that the depth of feeling expressed was not great.

I

Zwei Tage ist's nun, zwei Tage
Dass letzt ich Nahrung nommen,
Zwei Tage nun, zwei Tage!

Für dich, für dich mein Lieb
Für dich ist's, dass ich traure,
Für dich, für dich mein Lieb.

Die Fluth ist tief und breit,
Auf der mein Lieb gesegelt,
Die Fluth ist tief und breit!

Für dich ist's, dass ich traure,
Für dich, für dich, mein Lieb!
Für dich ist's, dass ich traure![1]

II

Wahrhaftig, ihn lieb ich allein,
Dess Herz ist wie der süsse Saft,
Der süsse Saft des Ahornsbaumes!
Wahrhaftig ihn lieb ich allein.

Ihn lieb ich, ihn lieb ich, dessen Herz
Verwandt ist dem Laube, dem Espenlaub,
Dem Blatt das immer lebt und bebt,
Wahrhaftig ihn lieb ich allein![2]

The musical element, we are told by Talvj, was lacking almost entirely in their songs; and this was granted even by the most enthusiastic advocates of the Indian language. Alexander von

1. Talvj, Charakteristik der Volkslieder, p. 123.
2. Ibidem, p. 123.

Humboldt, in speaking of the Carabeans, said that they spoke with great fluency, in a loud voice, and with a somewhat accented expression. This would give a slight poetical nature to their conversation. But their life was such, he continued, that their conversation did not seem to grow out of an overpowering emotion. Ambition was their motive force, not the emotions. These, then, were some of the reasons set forth by Talvj as operating in restraint of poetic productions among the Indians.

There was, however, one form of poetic expression current among them besides their conversation, and that was their dancing. In marked contradistinction to that of other nations, as Talvj was especially qualified to judge from her extensive acquaintance with the folk-lore of many other peoples, the Indian dance was not merely a favorite pastime, but was a language expressive of the most intimate feelings. The dance was to the Indians what song was to other nations. The perfect abandon of their war-dance; the reverential tread of the sacrifice dance; the slow movement of the peace-dance, gave perfect vent to their varying emotions. As accompaniment they sang single ejaculatory words, which the expressive movements of the dance rendered entirely intelligible. Talvj's appreciation of the poetry of the Indian dances was certainly an evidence of her German temperament,- a temperament which saw poetry in all harmony. To most students of the Indians their dances were grewsome and savage, an appeal to the lowest passions, and an expression of absolute barbarism. Charlevoix, who wrote a book about the Iroquois Indians, gave the general characteristics of their songs as wildness and pain. Their tones, he said, were monotonous and rigid. Yet the terror ascribed to the Indian war-songs must

have lain in the method of singing them, for the words themselves do not strike terror to the reader. The following war-song of the Iroquois tribes will illustrate the mild character of the words.

Nun geh' ich, nun geh' ich zum freud'gen Geschäfte
O grosser Geist, erbarme dich mein,
Im freud'gen Geschäfte hab' Erbarmen mit mir!

Auf meinem Wege gieb gutes Glück,
Und habe Erbarmen, o grosser Geist,
Mit meinem freud'gen Geschäfte! [1]

U. S. W.

In an interesting way Talvj describes the folk-lore of the Greenlanders and Eskimaux, who, although of apparently different origin, spoke a language of almost the same construction and character as that of the Indians. Their songs, like those of the Indians, had neither rhyme nor meter; they consisted of short irregular sentences, which were recited with a sort of rhythmic intonation. The funeral dirges of the Greenlanders were very similar to those of the Indians, especially the Sioux; perhaps not so much in content as in manner of singing. She saw a truly poetic emotion evidenced as the mourners and friends, in tones of woe and sorrow, chanted the songs of bereavement, interrupted, as it were, after each sentence by a loud cry of grief from all present. It is upon the authority of Carver whose travels among the Indians were very extensive, that Talvj traces the similarity between these northern dirges and those of the Sioux of the west. As to similarity of content the reader may judge for himself from a few verses of one of each nation's funeral dirges. Through Kranz, the famous Greenland traveler, Talvj was able to get a so-called Grönländische Leichenklage.

1. Talvj, Charakteristik der Volkslieder, p. 119.

Wehe mir! dass ich deinen Sitz ansehen soll, der nun leer ist! Deine Mutter bemühet sich vergebens, dir die Kleider zu trocknen!
Siehe meine Freude ist ins Finstere gegangen und in den Berg verkrochen!
Ehedem ging ich des Abends aus und freute mich! ich strengte meine Augen an und wartete auf dein Kommen![1]

U. S. W.

Compare with this the Indian Leichenklage of a mother at the grave of her little child.

O hätt'st du gelebt, mein Sohn, gelebt,
Bald hätte und wie! deine junge Hand
Den mächtigen Bogen spannen gelernt!

Verderben, mein Sohn, o hätt'st du gelebt,
Verderben hätten bald deine Pfeil'
Den Feinden uns'res Stammes gebracht!

Du hättest getrunken ihr Blut, ihr Blut,
Und hättest verzehret ihr Fleisch, ihr Fleisch,
Und Sklaven in Menge hätt'st du gemacht![2] U. S. W.

The criticism made by many travelers of the absolute spiritual poverty of the Indians was very distasteful to Talvj. She felt that such a judgment was neither fair nor just, for most of the Indian tribes with which civilized peoples had come in contact had been warlike peoples, whose souls were deadened to all poetic feeling by their unequal struggle for existence against the white man. As she suggests, we had not judged the Indians under original or even normal conditions. Such a study was quite unusual. Among the innumerable accounts of the Indians prior to her time and even after her time, Indian culture as such was not considered. From the originality of her work in this hitherto unexplored field, I think I may justly say that Talvj played an important part in creating an interest in America's original inhabitants among the Americans themselves.

1. Charakteristik der Volkslieder, p. 118.
2. Charakteristik der Volkslieder, p. 120.

It seems logical to infer that Longfellow received inspiration from her for his famous poem Hiawatha. This poetic interpretation of the Indians and their surroundings made by Talvj is the distinctive characteristic of Longfellow's poem. If one follows a reading of Talvj's essay with a reading of Hiawatha, he is struck at once by the feeling of an indefinable similarity. It cannot be attributed to any other cause than a similarity of poetic interpretation. Both put into their interpretation the romance of human existence and raise the Indians out of the state of animal savagery so commonly attributed to them.

A careful study of Longfellow's letters and journals, as published by Samuel Longfellow, does not reveal any direct mention of Talvj. In a letter written by Dr. N. W. Julius to Longfellow on May 28, 1838, the former says, "This day I had a long interesting letter from Mrs. Robinson [Talvj] who will pass some time in Dresden". This indicates that Longfellow knew Mrs. Robinson, at least in a literary way. Another indication which points toward his acquaintance with her was their mutual friendship with the family of Karl Follen. Longfellow knew Duponceau and Pickering also, as is indicated in a letter to his father dated Oct. 25,1840. The reference is in regard to a French article which the poet had written for the North American Review the preceding year. He says, "Mr. Duponceau of Philadelphia has read it; and wrote to Mr. Pickering to say that he liked it, and that I had taken the true ground." Besides these mutual literary friends Longfellow's enthusiasm for the German language and German romanticism suggests another avenue of acquaintance between him and Talvj.

On June 22, 1854, he writes in his Journal, "I have at length hit upon a plan for a poem on the American Indian. It is to weave their beautiful traditions into a whole." And on Sept. 19 he writes, "Working away with Tanner, Heckewelder, and sundry books about the Indian". Hiawatha appeared in 1855; Talvj's essay on Indian folk-lore in 1840. The precedence of her work is significant to the inference which I have drawn.

CHAPTER IV.

Studies in Popular Poetry.

Popular poetry is not the heritage of a few blessed individuals; by it is meant that general poetic productivity which pervades the mass of men as it pervades nature. Among the nations of Europe it is a dying plant; here and there a lonely relic is discovered among the rocks, preserved by the invigorating powers of the mountain air. But for the most part civilization has ruthlessly swept it from its path, and in the future we may expect to find merely dried specimens, preserved between two sheets of paper and securely guarded in a cabinet. This was Talvj's conception of popular poetry as she expressed it in the introduction to her study of "Slavic Popular Poetry" in the North American Review for 1846.[1]

Before we consider the service she rendered to the science of comparative literature and to the cause of human culture by this remarkable study, a brief review of the historical growth of interest in popular poetry may be in place. When old German folk lore was at its height, there seemed to be no definite and sharp distinction between artistic and folk poetry, as there was no marked difference in the education of the various classes of people. The songs of the people were sung in city and village alike by all classes, carried from one place to another by wandering minstrels, or again printed on leaflets and distributed at the fairs or even on the streets. Such ballads or lyrics were named variously, according to the theme, 'street-songs', 'peasant songs', 'love songs',

1. This idea is refuted by Professor Adolph Hauffen (Prag) in the Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde, vol.iv, (1894) p.5ff. "Today we can speak of a dying out of popular poetry only in those districts and among those peopleswhere literary German poetry prevails

'shepherd songs', etc., but the idea of calling them popular or folk songs seems never to have occurred to anyone. Soon, however, with the introduction of Humanism and classical learning the nation became divided into two distinct classes, the one composed of those possessing a classical education, the other of those who did not. In the seventeenth century the breach became especially pronounced. The old popular songs were ignored by the learned scholars and everything that belonged to the unlearned masses fell into disfavor. From this time forward until the time of Herder 'Volk' stood for rabble.[1] The vernacular and the classical languages were strictly differentiated, and because of the supposed vulgarity of expression of the people the former was driven out of literature. The deadening theory of poetry as something purely formal, artistic, conventional, and didactic - a prerogative of the educated - grew apace.

From a literary-historical standpoint the erasure of this division line marks the beginning of the great folk song movement. At the head of the movement stood Michel Montaigne with his study of Brazilian songs, from which he concluded that popular and purely natural poetry has a naive grace which compares favorably with the beauty of artificial poetry. An intense interest in some of the songs of the original inhabitants of America sprang up in Germany, the same song often appearing under various names. As remarked elsewhere, it was considered a great discovery when it was found that even the Indians had their poets. In England, the impulse to

1. To Herder 'Volk' meant the eternal source of all that was new and original. Today largely through the influence of the French Revolution the term has the added attribute of political. We are indebted to Herder for the word 'Volkslied', a word which practically defies English translation.
Cf. also Hildebrand, "Materialien zur Geschichte des deutschen Volkslied", Zeitschrift für den deutschen Unterricht vol. v.

recognize popular poetry came through Addison, who was the first to call attention to the old ballads; it was given further strength by the appearance of Ossian; and finally, in 1765, found its full expression in Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. An acquaintance with the existence and merits of popular poetry, and a desire to collect it, were thus born in many lands at once; but the nurturing into full growth and fruitful significance of this appreciation became the task of Germany.

When the Reliques came into Germany, Lessing had already prepared the way by his words, "Poets are born under every sky, and poetic expression is not the property solely of cultivated peoples."[1] Lessing, Hagedorn, and Haller had each in turn added to the store of popular songs. The theory of its study, however, had not yet been developed fully enough to afford popular poetry complete recognition; the requisite atmosphere was still in the process of creation. During the eighteenth century, indeed, a short-lived distinction between natural and popular poetry was frequently advanced, especially by Klopstock and those of his school who scorned the 'unpoetic rabble', but reverenced the 'song of soulful nature'. Into this pregnant atmosphere Percy's Reliques came. The effect was immediate and far-reaching. Ballad poetry was reborn, with Herder as its father; and his epoch-making work, Volkslieder,- for which, it is true, he had laid a foundation as early as 1770 and 1771 by his studies of Shakespeare, Ossian, and Oriental poetry,- appeared in 1774, and was reissued in 1778 and 1779. In 1772 he had begun a diligent study of the Reliques which, his wife tells us, became one of his great sources of recreation. Indeed, he re-

1. Erwin Kircher,"Geschichte des Volkslieds",Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung, vol. iv, p. 6.

garded the songs of primitive peoples as a source of inspiration second only to his Bible. The following year stood out as a great mountain peak in German literature; Klopstock finished his epic the Messiah, Goethe published his Götz, Bürger produced his Lenore, and Herder wrote his essay on Ossian and the Songs of Old Peoples. This latter came almost like a revelation, and resulted immediately in a great flood of translations of various ballads from the Reliques, with a consequent dissemination of interest in this kind of poetry. But the most important pledge of Herder's interest in folk lore was, as we have remarked, his Volkslieder, a work of incomparable influence upon the development of German literature, in that it caused a just valuation to be placed upon popular poetry. It has been called the greatest forerunner in modern times of the scientific and aesthetic development of Germany, because, first, it recognized the deep inner emotions of the most remote peoples and respected their individuality; and, second, out of its romantic conception of folk lore was born philology or the scientific study of folk languages. It pointed out that more than any other form of expression folk poetry was truly the voice of the people, beyond the powers of the individual, and the outgrowth of the dynamic strength of the whole unit. Herder did not realize at this time that countless treasures of song lay concealed within the limits of Germany, awaiting the magic word which should awaken them into new life. A few years later, in 1805, the glad note of discovery was sounded by Des Knaben Wunderhorn which awakened an echo of a thousand tongues, and drew an immediate auditory for Ludwig Uhland with his great work, Alte hoch und niederdeutsche Volkslieder in

1844 and 1845.

Just twenty years before this Talvj had entered upon the study of popular poetry, and by her work with the Volkslieder der Serben had gained an enviable position among the scholars of Europe. Ten years later by a paper in the Biblical Repository on the "Historical View of Slavic Literature", she took her place among those who were beginning to introduce this kind of literature into America. This paper was followed in 1836 by a discussion of the "Popular Poetry of the Teutonic Nations" in the North American Review; in 1840 by the epoch-making work, Charakteristik der Volkslieder; in 1842 by a paper on "Spanish Popular Poetry" again in the North American Review; in 1852 by an enlarged and revised book form of her early work on Slavic Literature; in 1853 by an article on "French Poetry" in Putnam's Magazine; and in 1869 by a short sketch entitled "Die Kosaken und ihre historischen Lieder" in Westermann's Monatshefte.

The work by native Americans in this field is practically a negligible quantity. Longfellow felt the strength and power of the movement, but never gave any extensive expression to it. An article which he wrote for the North American Review on "Moral and Religious Poetry of Spain" could not, as may be inferred from the title, compare with the kind of work done in Germany in the study of popular poetry. No where among students of literature in America did any such interest ever assume the proportions of a movement. Even at the present day Talvj stands practically alone in this field of activity, awaiting a worthy successor from among American scholars.

A close investigation of her two larger works, Charakteristik der Volkslieder and Literature of the Slavic Nations, will reveal the nature of her contributions, and the justice of the claim that they were truly cultural in nature. The Literature of the Slavic Nation, while it did not assume its present book form prior to 1852, nevertheless appeared in embryo as a rather lengthy paper in the Biblical Repository for 1834. In speaking of this article in the preface which her husband wrote for its later expansion he said, "The essay was received with favour by the public; and awakened an interest in many minds, as laying open a new field of information, hitherto almost inaccessible to the English reader." An insistent request on the part of scholars and public libraries led to its recasting into book form. These requests undoubtedly growing out of the excessive meagerness of sources of information regarding Slavic literature represented a general anticipation that this contribution would come very close to presenting this literature as one great whole. Other studies had been made, but, for the most part were only sketches of separate phases.[1]

At the time Talvj wrote, the Slavic population amounted to nearly three times that of the United States. The gigantic strides of Russia, the fate of Poland, the cry of Panslavism that had recently resounded through Europe, had excited an intense interest in the Slavonic race throughout the civilized world. Thoughtful men often asked themselves whether the Slavic nations were yet to overflow the Germans of Western Europe as did the Celts, to form

1. She herself called it merely an outline. The North American Review (vol.lxxi,p.329ff.) in speaking of it said:"The outline is not only drawn with correctness and precision but the filling up is very thorough and satisfactory..... Even one who is a Slavic scholar by parentage and early education can recur with profit to this work for information concerning the literary character and pursuits of his countrymen."

a new element of population with a new political and intellectual life. The mere consideration of such a possibility suggested the question, what was the nature of the moral and intellectual impulses, what the tendencies and spirit of these new men?

The literature of the Slavs had been studied and discussed in various ways and for various purposes. More or less critical ingenuity was manifested in all of the studies, and all possessed a certain element of thorough research; but until the appearance of Talvj's book no author had succeeded in presenting the results in a pleasing and thoroughly intelligible manner. In the words of the Independent for July 11, 1850, "It introduces the reader to a field of literary research which has long lain in comparative obscurity, but to which recent political struggles have given a melancholy interest..... All are eager to learn more of races, some of which, hitherto unknown almost in public affairs, have burst like a torrent upon the field of political strife, shaking Europe to its center, performing prodigies of valor, and exhibiting a degree of enthusiasm, energy, persistence, and tact, and an extent of resources almost unparalleled in the history of modern warfare."

In the details of her work Talvj showed an almost perfect knowledge of her subject matter. There were opportunities for difference in opinion as to certain theories of origin of the Slavic language, as to certain viewpoints of predominance of the Russian branch over all other Slavic branches, and without doubt, there was room for a decided variance with her treatment of the Polish people. But this was necessarily true in the case of a work worth while. Those who differed with her, and there were some, had sel-

dom or never as good grounds for their views as she. The book opened with a theological background, and she considered in turn the political, philosophical, and literary history with a depth of investigation, vigor of analysis, and a comprehensiveness rarely exhibited in a study of this sort." The volume is characterized by the extent and thoroughness of its investigation, its acute and judicious criticisms, its warm-hearted recognition of true poetry, even in an humble garb, and the force and facility of its style", said Harper's Magazine, which with the North American Review was then perhaps the official organ of expression of the American public in literary matters.

Her treatment of the subject was divided into four parts, exclusive of an introduction in which the author gave briefly but concisely an historical sketch of the Slavs as regarded their origin, their mythology, their early language, and the various branches of their language. Part one was in a measure a continuance of the introduction, in that it gave a history of the old or church languages and literature, a literature over which scholars and philologists had never agreed, but which had ever afforded a tempting field of research. In parts two and three the Slavi were treated under two general divisions: the Eastern, embracing the Russians, the Illyrico-Servians, the Croatians, the Slovenzi, and the Bulgarians; and the Western, embracing the Bohemians, the Slovaks, the Poles, and the Vendes in Lusatia. The work gave some account of the characteristics which distinguished these different dialects, and traced their literature from its earliest period down to the time at which she wrote. She showed that the principal divisions of the Slavic literature were the Russian, the Bohemian, and the

Polish; that the other branches of this great family possessed a literature of humbler pretensions, while some of them - like the Slovaks, who inhabited the northwestern part of Hungary - had little that deserved the name. The fourth part of the book dealt with the folk lore of the Slavic nations, and was perhaps the most interesting portion.

About twenty-five years before, Talvj had been the means of making known and appreciated the exquisite charm of Servian poetry throughout Europe. Now she again paid tribute and homage to its merit, which, as she showed, lay not in its studied elegance and careful polish, but in its unequalled simplicity and naturalness. She put it thus: "All that the other Slavic nations, or the Germans, or the Scotch, or the Spaniards possess of popular poetry can at the utmost be compared with the lyrical part of the Servian songs, called by them female songs, because they are sung only by females and youths; but the long epic extemporized compositions, by which a peasant bard sitting in a large circle of other peasants, in unpremeditated but perfectly regular and harmonious verse, celebrates the heroic deeds of their ancestors or contemporaries, has no parallel in the whole history of literature since the days of Homer."[1] It seemed to be the general concensus of opinion that this was the most interesting phase of her book largely, as one New York paper remarked, because the specimens of poetry furnished by the author are remarkable for their freshness, purity, and energy of thought, and are rendered into graceful and well chosen English. The Evening Post also esteemed this portion of the book the most interesting. "The peculiar genius of this literature", it said, "is delineated

1. Talvj, Literature of the Slavic Nations, p. 114.

in a skillful analysis and samples of the poems are given in English, preserving the peculiar rhythm, and, as far as may be, the verbal characteristics of the original. In these we seem to have a sort of key to the character of the race, and we rise from a perusal of these delightful pages with a feeling of closer acquaintance with the nations of the Slavic race." The force and ease with which she translated these poems was indeed remarkable, inasmuch as she was turning them into a language which was not her mother tongue, and which many hold to be one of the hardest of all languages to master. Her quick adaptation to the idioms of English is one of the strongest tributes to her keen intellect and her wonderful power of intellectual assimilation. She had been in this country only six years when she wrote the article for the Biblical Repository. Even in this article, which we may term the foundation of her book, there was very little which would make one conscious that the production was from a foreign-born hand. The North American Review spoke of this part of the book as a "precious gem, which gives brilliancy and animation to the whole." The woman's heart and hand were seen in it; the touch was tender and sympathetic, the characteristics which caused Goethe to rejoice that the work with the Servian poetry, twenty-five years before, had fallen into the hands of a woman, who was at the same time a scholar in every sense of the word.

In considering Slavic popular poetry as a whole Talvj said that the poetry of the Slavic nation was wild, passionate, and tender; love and war were its common themes. The love expressed in the Slavic songs was the natural love of the human breast, from its most tender and spiritual affection to irrepressible sensuality.

It was not the sophisticated love of civilization, it was the pure deep love of the unrestrained heart. The Slavi still followed the dictates of nature, and no artificial point of honor kept the hero from fleeing when he had met one stronger than himself. In its general tone the Slavic popular poetry was oriental. To enjoy it fully the reader had to let himself drift into an atmosphere of foreign views and prejudices. In this atmosphere all elements blended as one, the North and South, the East and West. "The suppleness of Asia and the energy of Europe, the passive fatalism of the Turk and the active religion of the Christian, the revengeful spirit of the oppressed, and the child-like resignation of him who cheerfully submits, all these seeming contradictions find an expressive organ in the Slavic popular poetry."[1]

The interest in this work was widespread. In the St. Petersburg paper for.....1834 - No. 227, I found a very interesting notice which was a reecho of the admiration expressed by some Servian scholars upon the appearance of her work with Servian folk lore.[2] "A ship from Boston has just arrived", this notice read, "bringing us this article from the pen of a highly esteemed German authoress. It is the same whom we have to thank for a translation of Servian folk songs published by Wuk Stephanowitsch Karadschitsch ..... It was scarcely to be hoped that Mrs. Robinson, as such, would continue her interest in the Slavic world, now so far removed; but behold! here comes an essay to us, in which the writer gives information to her new countrymen and to learned England in regard to a race of people hardly known by name. With wonderful skill,

1. Talvj, Slavic Literature, p. 320.
2. See chapter II.

using all the sources of information at hand, she has presented the relation of the various Slavic peoples, their languages and their dialects. Certainly every friend of the Slavs must thank her for this, but above all should the English be thankful, for whom she has illumined a new field, and in so doing rendered them a true service. We feel all the more moved to acquaint our readers with the existence of this work, inasmuch, as far as we know, only very few similar works have come to us in Russia."

Relating to a field scarcely known even to the scholars of Germany, the complete and masterly survey it presented, and the evidences of extraordinary talent and culture it afforded, invested it with great interest as a literary work and made it indispensable to the scholar. The first publication of the book attracted an unusual interest, and it obtained almost at once the distinction of being the most thorough and complete, as well as the first analysis of Slavonic literature extant. How Goethe would have rejoiced over this work had he lived to see it! The Evening Post saw in it a "work of which we ought to be proud, as the production of one of the adopted daughters of our country, who, having acquired a reputation among the authors of her native literature, now became engaged in adding to the riches of ours." The North American Review also recognized the volume as a valuable accession to our literature; and even the conservative English magazines spoke in most glowing terms of it.

From an earnest and thorough study of the songs of one branch of the Slavic nation, Talvj had thus added to her field of research the whole Slavic nation; and now she gradually extended her consideration to all the nations of Europe. Her Charakteristik

der Volkslieder, which was published in 1840, occupies a peculiar place in comparative literature. "Not without hesitation", she said, "do I send these leaves out into the world. Above all I would not have them regarded as a collection of folk songs. The collection is altogether too incomplete for that. Nor would I have them regarded as an historical text book, for the background of many parts of the picture must of necessity be concealed in shadow. I would wish the volume, however insignificant, to be regarded solely as a contribution to cultural history."[1] By the phrase "concealed in shadow" she had reference to such obscure sections of national folk lore as that of the Norwegians, to represent which she could find not a single publication of popular songs. Some of the older Saxon songs were omitted because they came to her notice too late.

Poetry is the natural language of the human race. Primitive peoples must needs use a form of expression which is at once creative, figurative, and imitative. The poetry of the earliest childhood of a people is like the speech of a stammering child. The people go into ecstacy over sensual pleasures just as a child does; and like a child they vent their grief and pain in loud and unrestrained lamentations. The more man comes under the dominion of external circumstances of government, civilization, and culture, the greater becomes the distance between life and poetry. His vocabulary developes until it gradually loses its imaginative and figurative qualities. The subjective gives way to the objective. But the origin of all speech, poetic, figurative, and subjective, maintains through all languages of the world in spite of all re-

1. Talvj, Charakteristik der Volkslieder, Vorwort.

finement of thought and expression, in spite of all boundary lines of logic. It seems that originally poetry, as the expression of the emotions was once identical with song. If this be true, we must consider 'song' as a term applied to a certain rhythmic raising and lowering of the voice, similar in measure to a chant. As one listens to a very young child sitting on the floor amusing himself with his blocks and other toys, entirely unconscious of his surroundings, the sounds which come to the listener certainly bear a resemblance to artless melody. Herder said that for a long time singing and speaking were one among the old races. In Wilhelm Meister, Goethe said, "Song is the first step in education; all else connects itself with it and is harmonized by it."[1]

Chamisso, in his investigations among primitive nations, found that none of the peoples whom he visited were entirely ignorant of poetry and song. As the various folk differed in their cultural development, so their songs differed also, varying from mere wild shrieks, as it seemed, to rhythmic and melodious intonations. These intonations seemed to represent the satisfaction of an inborn need. Wide difference in national character gave rise to nature-poetry and folk-poetry, which, despite their many contrasts, Talvj attributed to the same source. Very frequently folk-poetry and national poetry are conceived as one and the same thing; however, in a strict sense this is not true. Talvj draws the distinction very well when she says: In the broad sense of the word all the poetic literature of a people was national; in a narrower sense only that poetry was national which dealt primarily with the peculiarities and conditions of nations to which the various so-

1. Goethe, Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre, chap. i, Book II.

called national poets belonged. The poets, not the people, produced this type of poetry. Shakespeare, Goethe, Victor Hugo were national poets. On the other hand, folk-poetry was not always poetry which was read and sung by the common people, nor even necessarily a part of such poetry; for if this were the case, the Bible would be folk-poetry.

Folk lore, whether in the form of songs or of fables, is that production which, originating among a people in their internal and domestic relations has an influence in the develcpment of this people. Folk songs are the common property of all,- for all had a hand in producing them. Storm in his Immensee has put a beautiful description of folk songs into the mouth of Reinhardt: "They are not made, they grow, they fall from the air, they fly over the land like gossamers, here and there, and are sung in a thousand different places at the same time. In these songs we find our very own acts and sufferings; it is as if all of us had helped to make them, all working together. "Talvj's own definition carries with it the same thought: "Whether they proceed from the past or present they are the blossoms of popular life born and nurtured by the care of the people, cherished by their joys, watered by their tears, and because of this are characteristic through and through of the great mass of a nation and its condition."[1]

In connection with this Talvj's theory regarding the relative existence of the lyric and the epic is worthy of consideration; for although it is a theory not generally accepted, some of its views may help adjust rival explanations.- The oldest monuments of poetry are, as we know, epic in character. But in these very

1. Talvj, Charakteristik der Volkslieder, p. 11.

epics there are enough traces and evidences to lead one to say that back of the epic was the lyric. To put it more directly, the lyric embodies the present, the epic the past. Each new situation calls forth its expression, and the resulting songs are consequently not guarded within the strong box of script, but within the minds and hearts of the people themselves, principally of the women and youths. The epic is in reality a development of the lyric, or a sequence of it. As we look over the ballads of various primitive peoples we find, for example, of the songs before a battle, some that are bright and strong, filled with encouraging cheer for the warriors; some that are deeply pathetic, filled with the heartache of a sweetheart as she bids her lover farewell, or of a mother as she sends her son forth to serve his country. Always, however, we find even under the pathos an heroic recognition of necessity and duty. After the battle, we find songs of victory, wildly ecstatic, or songs of defeat touchingly pathetic in their tone of resignation. And thus in countless instances the epic gives evidence of having developed from the lyric.[1]

In the three great collections of folk lore, Herder's, Arnim and Brentano's, and Talvj's, the latter alone drew a sharp distinction between folk songs and popular songs and so may be said to have succeeded better in depicting the cultural development of primitive peoples. Herder did not restrict himself to folk songs in his collection, probably because of a general indifference on the part of the public; Arnim and Brentano followed his example in their Des Knaben Wunderhorn, probably for the same reason. So with other collections; for one reason or another they became popular

1. Talvj, Charakteristik der Volkslieder, Introduction.

and national in character.

In Charakteristik der Volkslieder the author did not content herself with compiling great quantities of material at hand. Rather, she strove to study the material, and by comparing it with the historic conditions of the people to arrive at a clear view of the very essence of folk song; if possible, she wished even to recognize the historical development of the poetry of separate peoples, from its naive to its conscious state. The work was a real contribution to cultural history, for the author succeeded in showing how very close was the connection between the customs of a people and the peculiarities of its songs. She demonstrated that changes which took place in a people's mode of thinking and living could be found in its poetry.

The first division of the work contained four chapters devoted to a description of the folk songs of the Asiatic, Malayan, Polynesian, African, and the original Americans, all peoples who were preeminently natural. Talvj gave to a comparatively uninformed public a vast number of facts with regard to these nations; facts which, for the most part, had been hitherto inaccessible. Her ingenuity combined these with examples of their poetry in a manner altogether pleasing, interesting and instructive. A quotation from Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung expressed the appreciation and interest which this division aroused in literary Europe. "We consider altogether excellent this latter description which, in all probability, is based on first hand knowledge of the author, and which shows how the Indian possesses no real talent for poetry as we should naturally expect, but rather, because of a predominant power of reason and a passionate ambition, seems capable of and in-

clined in the highest degree toward eloquence."[1]

The second division of the book, which dealt with European peoples, Talvj introduced by a chapter presenting the characteristics of Germanic folk lore. Especial attention was drawn to the family likenesses which, despite outward differences, existed among the traditional songs of all European peoples. In this way only could a repeated use of certain expressions, the repeated presence of the riddle, and the frequency of the question and answer form be accounted for. In the thoughts themselves decided similarities could be traced. For instance, almost all nations believed in the endurance of true love; in the power of inordinate grief to disturb the rest of the departed one; in divine destiny and justice.[2] She divided the Germanic peoples into three large divisions; the Scandinavian, the German, and the British. The British fell under the two heads English and Scotch; the German, under German and Dutch; the Scandinavian under Icelandic, Faröish, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish. The Norwegian and Swedish divisions were, much to the author's regret, left in an uncompleted state. Each division was introduced by introductory remarks, historical, philological, and political in character, according as history, philology, or politics played an important role in the cultural development of the people under discussion. Talvj made use of every opportunity to compare the various poetical forms of the different peoples, and she combined with all her general dis-

1. Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung, Jan. 18, 1841.

2. Cf. Anhang zu Wilhelm Grimms Übersetzung der dänischen Heldenlieder. In regard to this idea of likenesses Jakob Grimm said, "The divine, the spirit of poetry, is the same among all peoples and knows only one source."

cussions illustrative and characteristic songs. These three elements, introduction, discussion, and poetry, made the book what she wished it to be, a contribution to cultural history.

Some criticism was expressed of her treatment of German poetry, upon the score that it was lacking both in material and in theory of development. One of her critics excused her partially on the ground of her long absence from Germany during early youth. There was a noticeable predominance of love lyrics. The popular German drinking songs were entirely lacking. It cannot be doubted that these songs are quite as real folk-productions as some of the Weihnachts-Lieder, and their absence from her collection is a genuine flaw in her work.

Her treatment of Scotch poetry was perhaps the most excellent part of the book; for the author seemed to have, beyond a perfect familiarity with her material, a sincere love for this division of her subject. She herself said that there was no richer field in all Europe for the collector of folk songs than Scotland. Her statement of likenesses and differences between the English and the Scotch poetry is well worth any scholar's consideration. It is keen, searching, and well expressed.[1]

K. A. Varnhagen von Ense[2] saw in this book a revival of Herder's thoughts, extended and elevated, however, to fit the measure of an advanced knowledge. In another sense it seemed to him a new form of the Wunderhorn, raised out of German limitations into the field of all folk song. Open-mindedness, genuine sympathy, sane reason, comprehensive knowledge, and sound judgment had, he felt,

1. Charakteristik der Volkslieder, p. 603.
2. Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik, No. 86, 1840.

given the author an unusual equipment for handling such a subject. Chance, moreover, assisted her by first affording her a residence in Russia during the most susceptible years of her life, and later by giving her a residence in America during years of more mature thought and sympathy, thus leading her into a more intimate knowledge of English and Scotch characteristics through her every increasing mastery of the English language.

Some critics felt that she had taken the idea of "Volkslieder" in too narrow a sense. She herself, however, had a compilers natural sense of the necessity for selecting and choosing most carefully. With a woman's delicacy of feeling she no doubt eliminated much that a man in the same position would have included. Goethe warned the authors of the Wunderhorn against the sing-song of the Minnesingers, and the wretched commonness and flatness of the Meistersingers; and some of the omissions in Talvj's book may be due to the influence of such a warning, although it was never extended to her.

From the criticisms and comments which I have considered worthy of consideration in this chapter, we may feel certain that a recognition of Talvj's position in the literary world was firmly established. Certainly no higher praise could have been expressed than the oft repeated wish that the same author would soon place the literary world even more deeply in her debt by a continuation of the work, making out of it a sort of world history of popular poetry.

CHAPTER V.

History of the Colonization of New England from 1607 - 1698.

American historiography is of comparatively recent origin. In her introduction to her Colonisation von Neu England Talvj states: "Throughout the whole eighteenth century here and everywhere else the spirit of historical research slumbered. Valuable documents lay dust covered in undisturbed rest in public archives or private libraries. Uninterpreted manuscripts served as wrapping paper." The catalog of writers who manifested any noteworthy interest in investigation and compilation is a brief one. One of the chief of them, Thomas Prince, gathered together material with wonderful diligence and patience, and succeeded in presenting to the public a Chronological History of New England up to 1633. To Callender and Backus, minor names, we are also grateful for many original documents which in one way or another throw light upon the darkest periods of American history. Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts which appeared toward the close of the Revolution should have been a mine of valuable historical materials for as royal governor of Massachusetts the author had access to very authentic manuscript material; but unfortunately much that he had collected was lost or destroyed during the Stamp Act riots.

Amid this general poverty of formal collections of facts or manuscripts, Talvj found four main sources of historical data upon New England; Cotton Mather's Ecclesiastical History, William Bradford's diary, John Winthrop's History of New England, and

Edward Johnson's Wonder-working Providence of Zion's Savior. The first of these known also as the Magnalia Christi Americana, Talvj considered authentic, but very narrow in viewpoint. This history extends over the period between 1620 and 1698. It is regarded as the most important book produced in America during the seventeenth century. It has been suggested, that as a history it was unsatisfactory because the author was too near to events to be strictly impartial. His personal feelings perhaps unconsciously colored his judgments. In regard to his facts he is charged with being careless and inaccurate. However, the work is indispensable to an understanding of New England history. The diary of William Bradford, governor of New England was in 1847 still in manuscript and was not known except in fragments. Some fifty years later the manuscripts were collected and published. Much of the original material became a part of the church records of Plymouth through Nathaniel Morton, a nephew of Bradford. Morton also used many of Bradford's accounts in his New Englands Memorial, but many of the manuscripts were lost during the Revolution and have never been found. Until 1790 John Winthrop's History of New England remained in manuscript form. Cotton Mather and Hubbard used it, the latter quoting much of it word for word without mentioning the source. In 1790 the part dealing with the history of Massachusetts was published under the title of A Journal of the Transactions and Occurrences in the Settlement of Massachusetts. Not until 1825 was the entire collection of Winthrop given to the public. He was, in Talvj's estimation, the leader in the history of the period 1630 to 1649. The chief value of Edward Johnson's history which appeared in 1654 lay in the fact that the author was a contemporary of the events which he described.

However, its style was weak and difficult to read because of a rather absurd and artificial piety running through the whole. In 1658 it was plagiarized by Ferdinand Gorges and published as the work of Gorges' grandfather under the title, America painted to Life, A True History.

There were, of course, many lesser sources deserving of a brief mention. Those for Massachusetts comprise several small manuscripts by Edward Winslow; the personal letter of the vice-governor Thomas Dudley to the Countess of Lincoln, patroness of the colonies; manuscripts by Higginson, Wood, Welde, Lechford and Josselyn which recorded personal experiences; and Sir Ferdinand Gorges Brief Narration of the Original Undertaking and the Advancement of the Plantations. This latter was valuable as showing an Englishman's theories and plans for American settlements. For the Indian Wars Mason, Underhill, Gardiner, and Vincent contributed much. The history of Providence and Rhode Island is based almost entirely on rather imperfect accounts of the first founders, Clark, Gorton, and Roger Williams largely in the form of letters. Finally, for the settlement of Connecticut, with the exception of a very few letters, there was really no authentic contemporaneous account. The governmental chronicles and various church archives of later times furnished practically all of the historical information of this colony. A General History of Connecticut, published in London in 1781 was so unreliable that it was of little value as history. Talvj said of this book, "Nothing can be more characteristic of the sentiment against America then ruling in England, than that this bungling piece of work had its second edition the following year."

Talvj had a single criticism for all these sources:- they lacked independent viewpoint and a sense of detached historical

perspective. English historians, on the other hand, she condemned for their lack of intimacy with American conditions and events, and their inability to grasp the spirit of what they recorded. Chalmers alone of them was an authority on New England. Neal's history was little more than a reorganization of Cotton Mather's with greater purity of style. The prejudice against America was such as to make perverted and false statements more acceptable than facts, and so many errors circulated by these careless early historians are, today, regarded as authentic facts. But these were not, in her mind, the most deplorable phases of early histories, whether English or American. Our so-called standard histories clothed the events of the formative days of our country in a mantle of myth and legend. The very criticisms made at the outset by the North American Review of Talvj's history gave evidence of the tendency to require of a history, that conservator of truth if there was any, a novelistic style in order that it might be popular with the masses. Unfortunately the truth did not always make a popular appeal to the masses, and as a consequence truth had been sacrificed for the sake of popularity in a large part of our historical writings. Even Bancroft, who was generally considered the standard American historian, wrote, it is claimed, "most cautiously, with the greatest dread of the slightest admission, and with intense straining to make out a perfect case."[1] Why, it might be significantly asked here, did Talvj not translate Bancroft for her German readers instead of undertaking to write a history herself? As I see it, the answer lies in this fact: no American history told the truth as gleaned entirely from original sources and as evolved out of a

1. Fisher, Myth Making Process in Histories of the U. S., p.68.

clear unbiased view of these sources.

Talvj was almost a century ahead of her time in her scientific investigation and use of original sources in these pictures of early colonial history. Only within recent years have the many sad deficiencies in American historical writings begun to be generally felt. Of late through the almost universal dissemination and improvement of public libraries, the multiplied opportunities of gaining access to old pamphlets and original evidences of all sorts, American scholarship has everywhere been aroused to a desire for a clearer knowledge and a more tangible grasp of events upon this continent.[1]

A brief comparison of Talvj's history with Bancroft's will show how in some respects hers fulfilled even a greater mission than his. First of all, Bancroft as an American writing for an American public, wrote from an American viewpoint, while Talvj, a German-American writing for a German public, chose a German viewpoint. We may characterize the difference between these two positions as a difference between a perfervid patriotism and a calm scientific interest, which made an unbiased search among original

1. Cf. Proceedings of American Philosophical Society, vol. li, p.54 Truth is winning over fiction, as may be seen from some of the recent historical writings. The names of some of Sydney G. Fisher's works are significant. (Mr. Fisher is a writer and lawyer of considerable prominence in Philadelphia 1856 -) We find above his name such titles as these: The True Benjamin Franklin; The True William Penn; The True History of the American Revolution; The True Daniel Webster etc. Mr. Fisher says with regard to this awakening to the importance of truth in historical writings, "Within the last two years, in writing a life of Daniel Webster, I had occasion to examine the original evidence of our history from the war of 1812 to the Compromise of 1850, and I found that it had substantially been used in our histories of that period. There was no ignoring of it or concealment of it such as I had found when I investigated the original evidence of the Revolution."

sources for materials which should present all sides of the historical situations, the side of the unsuccessful, as well as of the successful. In the second place, Bancroft's work was not as concentrated as Talvj's, inasmuch as it encompassed a much greater space and period of time. In comparison with his history she called hers "a single room of a whole big house."[1] Naturally since the German viewpoint would, in many instances, be different from that of an enthusiastic American, a German would dwell on the smaller details more than an American. To all appearances America was advancing by leaps and bounds, fairly striding through the fields of industrial and political development. It was only logical that an American historian should pay little or no attention to many of the small and to him insignificant details in the early years of colonization. It was just as logical that a foreigner with a keenly scientific and wide-awake mind should, after the first surprise at such rapid advancement, seek its causes in the details of early establishment and development. An American's enthusiasm does not in any way depreciate his ability; it is merely a reflex of the life and development about him. This reflex could not exist in a foreigner. The fact that Talvj admired Bancroft and his work led her to consider many of his views very carefully, and in many instances the two agreed. However, with all her decided leaning toward the great historian, she nevertheless remained independent in her judgments;and in some instances, again, the two writers seemed to be almost diametrically opposed. In speaking of Bancroft's History of the United States, Francis J. Grund said, "Bancroft's history seems on the whole to have fallen short of its purpose - it

1. Colonisation von Neu England, p. xiii.

lacks a philosophical and calm view which should put the life of the states into accord with the general tone of humanity."[1]

Another great point of difference between Talvj's history and Bancroft's was in the distribution of emphasis. Talvj laid great emphasis on settlements, dwelling at length on customs and religious views, and the development of law and order out of the inner life and nature of the colonists. Bancroft, on the other hand, perhaps because of the greater scope of his work, set forth monumental figures in the early history of New England, and focused the minor developments in these. The former's was a history of colonial spirit rather than colonial activity. It contained the elements of a "Kulturgeschichte", a form of history as yet undeveloped.

But the question naturally arises, why did she write this history for German readers? In spite of an almost perfect mastery of English style, she always felt more at home with the German language, and as a consequence the greater part of the works was written in German. This fact, however, would not stamp her work as written for German readers. It is undoubtedly true that although she wrote from a point of view whose chief consideration was the interest in America and the knowledge of American affairs which then existed in Germany, she sincerely hoped that her work would find readers on both sides of the Atlantic, and was by no means unmindful of a possible American audience. There were many Americans who read the German fluently, and whose ever-increasing interest in German ideals and methods had already shown that they considered the tongue no barrier to an absorption of a new work of learning.

1. Francis J. Grund, Die Americaner, p. 106.

But in the main, as she herself consciously asserted, her ambition was to interest the Teutonic race in the land which was destined to become yearly the home of more and more of its children. She felt that intimate relations must in time grow up between the Germans of the Fatherland and those of the New World; and inasmuch as conditions in the two countries were so different, she believed a knowledge of America necessary in order that Germany might the better and more readily adjust herself to the demands of this new relationship. She realized the significance of the role America was playing in the world's history, and she wanted the Germans to realize this significance in terms of early development. Before Talvj, Ebeling and Kufahl were the only Germans who had made a study of colonial United States. At the time they wrote many of the main sources were still hidden, and besides they knew neither the locality, nor the people, nor the institutions about which they wrote, from personal knowledge. Both, like Bancroft, included a field of far greater scope in time and place. Already, however, so considerable an interest was being manifested in Germany about America's history, that a history from the pen of a German-American was tacitly demanded. Nothing bears better witness to Talvj's hope of bringing about an understanding between the two nations than her copious notes which made many expressions and view-points clear to the foreign reader, and prevented in advance confusion which often arose out of misunderstanding.

The task of the historian was not small, as Talvj realized. His task it was to give the reader a clear view of not merely salient events, but of details which, seeming in themselves cumbersomely trivial, assumed the greatest significance when the proper relation to the far-reaching consequences, as illumined by the in-

stinctive judgment of the trained historian, was shown. In doing this, Talvj showed exceptional skill. Her view-point as we have before intimated, was larger than that of the ordinary historian of political events; for her work involved a consideration of social development in which private, public, religious, moral, individual, and general relations entered. Her treatment of the subject matter was of such specific and concrete nature that the situations portrayed bore the stamp of truth and reality to the reader.

She portrayed the Puritans justly and impartially. A pride with reference to the Puritan fathers had grown up, especially in New England, which stifled all recognition of other forces back of American progress. Again, America was becoming a great nation; she was trying hard to develop a national culture, and nothing was more natural than that, in this conscious effort, she should be blinded to all but present achievement. To lose sight of humble beginnings and to credit failure and success impartially is a natural consequence of ill-restrained enthusiasm in any new project whose development and progress are rapid. A careful reading of Talvj's history will show very plainly why an American national culture did not develop during the early days of settlement. Many highly cultured men and women came to America but they alone could not exert any decided humanitarian influence; and pioneer life did not in itself contain the conditions in which to develop a native culture. For a people to exchange the surroundings of a highly developed civilization for the less advanced or primitive cultural environments of a new country, always involves an abasement of ideals. "Despondency, homesickness, and a general lowering of all the higher aspirations and ideals seems the inevitable result until

the psychic transformation has taken place, from which the energetic personality emerges with a resolution to create a new world of his own out of new surroundings."[1]

Hard, unyielding, primitive conditions of life and sustenance left the early settlers neither time nor inclination for the development and enjoyment of music, art, literature, or even religion. Later when the time and inclination came, as life became less strenuous, America was forced to seek the seeds of culture without herself. What culture the pioneers brought with them had been destroyed by the harshness of nature and the seeds had not been planted in their descendants forcefully enough to warrant their development without external aid. Talvj's treatment of the Puritan makes us feel the force of this truth in such a way that, while we continue to admire the virtues and the courage of the New England fathers just as much as before, we begin at the same time to investigate other sources of national culture. The Puritans did not even have time to develop a religion. They fought to maintain certain forms of worship, but religion as such was swallowed up in the struggle.

By a number of personal letters Talvj presented a glimpse into the inner household of an English Puritan family, which afforded the best and most vivid "Sittenbild" of the times. One could not fail to realize that these early settlers were as cruel and stubborn as nature herself. Back of the establishment of many of the colonies lay the attempt to force certain individuals to a strict adherence to many customs, barbarian almost in their simplicity and crudity. Infringement of personal liberty was found on

1. Goebel, Annual Report of American Historical Association for 1909, p. 188.

every hand. With a strict regard for truth Talvj did not see the mildness in the laws of the Puritans which almost all other writers of history extolled. True, they made no attempt to base their institutions on any of the bloody decrees of the darkest period of the middle ages; but the fact was lost sight of that many of these bloody decrees, found in the laws od European nations, would be empty and meaningless on the statute books of the Puritan settlers. As Talvj said, in the wilderness of America there was not even the possibility of many of the crimes found among the kingdoms of Europe; and want of provision for the punishment of impossible crimes is no evidence of mildness. The infringement of personal liberty certainly was not a mark of mildness to be extolled. The Puritans were not a free people. The stocks, branding, ducking, whipping, and other equally harsh forms of punishment stared them in the face for the slightest offence. It was an offence to wear certain forms of head dress and hair dress; certain kinds of clothes were forbidden; smoking and chewing were forbidden; the celebration of Christmas or Easter was a serious offence. There was even an ordinance against the use of the word saint as a part of the name of a town. If such acts were considered an offence, one can easily see what must have been the attitude toward offences which we should consider real. But this harshness, as Talvj pointed out, was only a reflex of the times, in which tolerance was considered indifference.

To explain this intolerance and to temper the judgment toward the Puritans, which might otherwise seem too harsh, she worked out very carefully a background of religious intolerance in England which drove men and women into the wilderness of America in order to worship as their conscience dictated. Her account compre-

hended the whole development of the protestant spirit which led to the emigration, showing what influence the ideas and ideals of other countries had in hastening it. She demonstrated the connection of this bit of local history with world history by giving it a cultural background, not statistical. Step by step she traced the growth of discontent, the growth of suppression of individual freedom of thought and action, the gradual growth of royal dominance over the very souls of the subjects. With influences of similar nature pouring in from all sides she showed how this discontent finally became the bomb of revolution and evolution. Having completed this background, she showed how the process of development went on logically to the history of the first settlers in New England. The very nature of their separation anticipated intolerance after coming to this country. The material which Talvj used was not new, nor was her handling of it entirely original, but she collected into one book a network of facts which, though related, had not seemed so, because they had to be sought in a number of widely scattered sources.

Talvj's treatment of the Puritans showed plainly that democracy was not an original condition, as so many enthusiastic American writers claimed. The primary object of the first settlers in coming to America was to replant the Church of England in America, instituting in the process a few changes from the prescribed ritual. Their whole energy seemed to be directed toward establishing new congregations, and each new one in turn was greeted with great rejoicing. There was no democratic spirit to be found in these various congregations, what happened in one happened in all. Excommunication in New England during the seventeenth century was not less serious than the papal excommunication. Only those who were church

members and who subscribed to all the ordinance of the church had a voice in the government; the colonists were swayed by a limited monarchy, with the church as the monarch. Out of the very necessities of primitive life the democracy developed in America from an original theocracy. From a representative church assembly the step to a representative state assembly was not great. At first an aristocracy threatened but the trials and hardships of pioneer life gave birth to democratic tendencies which could not be quelled. "Thus early," Talvj said, "began the democratic tendencies of the people, the natural product of a wilderness and a condition in which physical strength was at a premium."[1] The church did not exist because of the state, but the state because of the church, and if the state attained to a complete democracy it was due only to the fact that the constitution of the Puritan church, in as far as democracy harmonized with theocracy, was democratic. This view was quite different from that ordinarily expressed - that the origin of our democracy was in the Puritan church.

Another and valuable feature of Talvj's book was her estimate of the Indian. On the whole, as we have remarked before, it was generous and charitable. While she did not try to excuse the Indian for his blood curdling acts of cruelty, she sought for and, in many cases, found definite causes for such cruelty, and underneath the cruelty which caused many travelers and writers to class him as a beast, she found the man, with a man's feelings and a man's honor. Over and over again she showed that the first relations between the whites and the redmen were friendly, that the redmen venerated the whites and believed that through them great happiness

1. Talvj, Colonisation von Neu England, p. 225.

would come; and that gradually, as their simple dream failed to come true, suspicion was aroused. They began to feel that the white man was not dealing honestly with them, but was slowly and surely dispossessing them of what was theirs by the natural right of original occupation. When this dispossession reached the form of slavery, a crime which the Indians hated above all others, their passions were thoroughly roused, and then many of their acts were bestial in the highest degree. She did not minimize Indian treachery, but described it quite as vividly as the treachery of the whites toward the Indians. We sometimes feel that the Indian cared less for a human life than he did for that of one of the wild animals of the forest, but the white man earned the title to the same indifference by the manner in which he dealt with the savages. In most cases, as Talvj pointed out, the savage was pursuing the one and only law of life known to him, self-preservation. That the same could hardly be said for the white man, she illustrated by an incident first related by Hutchinson. During the war with the Indians in 1637, after surprising them in their fortifications, Mason set fire to a wigwam. The blaze, spreading rapidly among the dry underbrush, burned the inmates out like so many rats. Escape was absolutely impossible. The few who did escape the flames fell into the hands of the English as prisoners. In the division of prisoners later, a dispute arose over the ownership of four women. In order to settle the dispute the four women were executed. As Hutchinson said, "The cleverness as well as the morality of this act can well be questioned."

Talvj's chapter on the conversion of the Indians is worthy of especial attention, because the failure of the Indians to embrace the Christian religion has given rise to many of the harshest con-

demnations of their character. The chief cause of this failure, as she saw it, was the fact that too many of the missionaries did not know the Indian language. One need only glance over the accounts of the Indians as given us by travelers to realize at once that the successful missionaries were those who knew their language and who thus could enter into their real thoughts and feelings. Many of the German missionaries, as well as John Eliot, Roger Williams, and Pierson owed their success to having learned the language before attempting to convert the Indians. The success of one Daniel Gookin's sons in training helpers among the Indians themselves, for missionary work struck a decided blow at the theory advanced by so many that these native Americans were incapable of culture. As early as 1664 the Indians were taught to read and write English and many even were sent to Harvard to be trained in theology. As John Eliot said: "The Indians must become men, that is, they must be civilized before they can become Christians."[1] But the civilizing of the Indians seemed almost a hopeless task. It was, as Talvj realized, hard to point out a cause for this. There was no justice in saying that they were incapable of civilization and culture, at least as far as innate traits of character were concerned. It is true that Roger Williams, after having loved the Indians, grew to hate them, and applied to them the terms envious, revengeful, treacherous, and deceitful. But Talvj added this in her note, "Truly his judgment in this respect changed only after the influence of the whites, especially their liquor, had ruined the Indians."[2] It would seem that the advent of the white man was as a breath of poison to the

1. Colonisation von Neu England, p. 424.
2. Ibidem, p. 416.

Indians. Nothing in the culture and civilized life of the whites attracted the savages but the cultivation of the fields. Double gain alone seemed to move them. In order to explain this attitude as well as to offer an apology for her lengthy discussion of the Indians Talvj said: "If we have been too minute for many readers in recounting a condition of the Indians whose meager traces seem scarcely to warrant it a place in history, we would offer the excuse that we believed we could answer the seemingly unanswerable assertion, that the Indians were incapable of civilization. We believed this could be done by a simple presentation of certain remarkable accomplishments of a few individuals during the short period of twenty-five years. The assertion in question arose during the eighteenth century and the present age gladly repeats it. It is certain that from Eliot's time to the present not a single earnest effort was made to elevate the condition of the savages. The demoralized tribes of the east, sunken almost into a state of bestiality, no longer afford an opportunity for such effort. But the numerous tribes of the west, wild, barbaric, and degenerated by the influence of self-seeking, bartering or arrogant whites, offer a rich field to the missionaries of the Christian world. These Indians are not yet brutalized. The force of love can reclaim them."[1]

Another evidence that the history is cultural is the part the "Volk" play throughout. Again and again we are brought to realize the importance of this "Volksgeist." This is brought out very definitely in the account of the movement toward democracy within the colony. The movement itself is as subtle and intangible

1. Colonisation von Neu England, p. 430.

as this popular spirit which so many have tried to define without success. But despite its subtlety and intangibility it contains the germ of freedom which later grew into the American Revolution. The Germans more than all other nations seemed to appreciate the power of this "Volksgeist"; we may not say that they laid an undue emphasis upon it when we look at present day Germany and consider that the force which made it what it is was born from this same "Volksgeist". Besides this term, she uses such expressions as "Volksgunst", "Grimm des Volkes", Herzen des Volkes","Volksaberglauben" and others. All of these are terms found in cultural histories, but represent as well circumstances of unbounded significance to the political and industrial development of a country. The word "Volksgeist"in particular has been interpreted by the enthusiastic American as meaning "sovereign will of the people", and too often, also, has become the mere slogan of the demagogue. Her view of the sovereign will of the people stood in rather bold opposition to Bancroft's, but was, I believe, the deeper and clearer interpretation of a German in such matters. She said, "The sovereign will of the people is seldom anything else than the blind feeling of an ignorant and passionate mob."[1] Bancroft, on the other hand, looked upon it almost as upon something sacred. However, Talvj's viewpoint did not prevent her seeing in the very passion of the mob the germs of democracy and freedom. It was merely that she would handle this passion in a more careful way, so that it might not become rebellion.

Still another chapter in her history which reads like a chapter in a cultural history is the last entitled, "The tone and

1. Colonisation von Neu England, p. 453.

spirit of the colonies." It is a chapter so worth the reading that a brief summary of it may not seem out of place - The pestilence of the body which prevailed was not so deadly as the diseased spirit of the people which led to the saying among the people that the devil in person was in their midst. The belief in witchcraft seized the people like a convulsion. Neither the advance of science nor the revelation of the reformation had allayed the idea of a living personal devil. Becker and Thomasius in Germany had not yet brought forth victorious weapons against this belief. When the Puritans left England, superstition was at its height, and certainly life in the American wilderness with its accompanying terrors and dangers did not offer any cultural conditions which might remove these superstitions. Rather, superstitious fancies found nourishment on every hand. God was angry and heaven had to be appeased, and this could be accomplished only through prayer, fasting,and penance. When, however, in an ecstatic moment of prayer one or another seemed by his gestures and actions to be beside himself, he was immediately considered to be under the influence of the devil.

At one time in the colonies, Talvj tells us, there existed a veritable mad-house where for days the 'possessed' raved and howled. The whole village was thrown into the most intense excitement and assembled to witness the work of the devil. As prayers and fasting availed nothing, a frightful state of affairs ensued. Superstition made it possible to give vent to personal jealousy and hatred and with this as the real motive many innocent victims suffered tortures and even death. These persecutions were enough to drive the accused mad and so they really seemed to justify the accusation. Talvj's recital of the imprisonments, trials, and punish-

ments is most vivid and impressive, but at the same time it may be said that her treatment of the situation is that of the dispassionate scientist. Most historians either omit the portrayal of this condition of affairs, or, if they discuss it, make only superficial observations. But it ought not to be ignored for, better than anything else, this outbreak of religious perversion explains many extraordinary events and movements in the early history of America, as well as in our present time.

As may have been gathered from even the brief remarks which have been made, the heaviness of her style might offer a basis for criticism; and, indeed, the North American Review did point this out as a defect. The justification of her solid and weighty prose seems to me, however to be plain; for her style is an inevitable consequent both of the purpose of historical narration as well as of the point of view of the author. One can scarcely expect a history to possess the vigorous style so much a necessity of successful writings of fiction. The question arises, is the student of history to be amused or informed? The details which were so largely responsible for the criticism were necessary to her development of the subject, for as she said, "As in physical so in political bodies, little things have developed to maturity quite as remarkably, as great things."[1]

The North American Review considered both the German language and the subject matter which she chose elements rather too unwieldy for the production of an attractive history. In comparing her style with Bancroft's it said, "Talvj's style is not more vivacious or epigrammatic than that of her countrymen in general;

1. Colonisation von Neu England, Introduction xiv.

it is somewhat tedious, hardly fresh enough, either of fact or disquisition to justify its length for an American reader. Bancroft's success is due to a vigorous imagination and a crisp nervous style. It reveals startling and brilliant pictures, being a work of genius rather than laborious detail."[1] In the face of the author's own assertion that she was writing for German readers, such a criticism hardly seems fair; nor was it voiced by the nation for whom she wrote. In a Bücherschau for 1851 the following statement gives evidence of the very favorable reception of her history in Germany: "Her style is simple, but vivid and warm, and, where the circumstance demands, not without force and emphasis." But that not all American critics took the attitude of the North American Review is shown by the following extract from a clipping of one of the contemporary New York papers: "The style of this history is always clear and forcible, and men and things are brought into distinct relief. Without exaggerating the Puritans, it does them justice, and while treating them in a friendly and sympathetic spirit, it betrays no sense of hereditary obligation to set their virtues too strongly forth. The author has examined what she saw with German industry and thoroughness. Not only ought it be read by Germans in Germany but also by the Germans here, and all the Americans who can read German."

Talvj's own judgments, whenever they occur, are clear, pointed, reasonable, and sound. While often diametrically opposed to those of American historians, they are never antagonistic in temper. She has always stood firmly upon her own convictions, and given expression to them in the most direct manner. In 1852 William

1. North American Review, vol. lxix.

Hazlitt, recognizing how great a store house of historical information this work was, translated it into the English language. The translation does not by any means do the original justice, but in case of inability to read the original with appreciative fluency, American students should, without question refer to it; for it is probably one of the best source books in American literature today for early colonial history.

CHAPTER VI.

Miscellaneous Essays.

With a view, probably, of diffusing popularly among her German countrymen a knowledge of America that would otherwise have been possessed by the cultivated alone, Talvj wrote articles for several of the most popular German magazines of the time, giving through their pages interesting bits of description of places she visited, as well as charming pictures of early American life. In one of these papers which will be considered at some length later, we have, so far as I have been able to discover, the only direct expression of her views regarding slavery. In a contribution to the North American Review she had described Russian slavery, but in this German paper she expressed her view regarding the curse of slavery to America. With the same desire to awaken in America an interest in Europe, because only in mutual exchange of interests did she feel that the highest development of either was possible, she wrote for several of the leading American magazines of the time; among them, besides the aforementioned North American Review, Putnam's, Sargent's and the Atlantic Monthly. Not only is the versatility of the writer shown in the wide scope of subjects treated, but the German idea of universality, so decidedly a definite purpose of her life, is also brought out by her effort to combine the two elements of culture, German and American.

For the most part I shall touch upon these articles very briefly. Of the eight which appeared in the American magazines, all, with the exception of the one printed in Sargent's, are accessible

to any who may care to read. Of Sargent's Magazine, however, only six issues were published between the years 1843 and 1846; and thus far my efforts to obtain the number which contained Talvj's article on "Goethe's Loves", a subject of obvious interest, have most regrettably proved fruitless. Several of the longer essays which appeared in the North American Review and Biblical Repository appeared in book form later, and have already been discussed. Four of the seven dealt with Popular Poetry of the Teutonic, Slavic, Spanish, and French nations respectively and are so reserved for discussion in the chapter on Popular Poetry, which furnishes a comprehensive view of all her work upon that subject. The other three articles were: "The Household of Charlemagne" in the North American Review for 1855; "Russian Slavery" in the North American Review for 1856; and "Dr. Faustus" in the Atlantic Monthly for 1858.

"The Household of Charlemagne" was called forth by a review of two German histories expressive of the first zeal on the part of national historians to clear up the comparative darkness of their early history. Recognizing the peculiar charm of a close observation of the private life and individual habits of a truly great man,Talvj confined her remarks entirely to the private life of Charlemagne,and this she presented in an exceedingly interesting manner. So far as I know,there is no other similar discussion of this phase of the great monarch's life in the English language. To me its chief value lay in the fact that it stripped off, partially, the cloak of myth and legend in which I was wont to clothe this monumental figure of history. She manifested a woman's judgment in choosing the private life of this hero of ancient times, for by so doing she was enabled to add materially to the picture of the 'whole man',the idea of which, physical as well as spiritual, as a ground-

work for all biography, prevailed with Talvj as with all of the German thinkers. As she saw it, this 'whole man' had a private as well as a public life, and the public life was intimately connected with the private, in many instances in the relation of cause and effect. To the general reader as well as to the student I would recommend the reading of this article.

There is no doubt that the article on "Russian Slavery" was called forth by the situation here in the United States. As will be seen later in this chapter, Talvj did not come out as a militant abolitionist, although her views as expressed in one of her papers indicate that she was one of its most bitter opponents. That she made a most thorough investigation of the question of servitude, both white and black, is evidenced throughout both articles. While she did not draw parallels between Russian and American slavery, for each in itself was an independent institution, a burning hatred for its effects and principles pervaded the article. In the main it was a history of the development of serfdom in Russia, pointing out how liberty among the working classes diminished little by little until even the mere remnant of it disappeared. She concluded with the only reference to negro slavery throughout the whole discussion in an expression of her own opinion that Russian slavery was superior to negro slavery, since even under its worst iniquities moral relations were more respected.

The "Dr. Faustus" article, which appeared in 1858, set forth the legend of Faust as well as its historical background. An interest in Germany and its culture had been growing constantly since 1840. Goethe had at once appealed to the Americans as one of the foremost of writers and thinkers, and his "Faust" was arousing

the greatest enthusiasm, so that this article met a demand which was felt if not voiced.

Turning now to Talvj's German magazine articles, we find them appearing as follows: 1845, "Aus der Geschichte der ersten Ansiedelungen in den Vereinigten Staaten", Raumers Taschenbuch; 1856, "Ausflug nach Virginien," Westermanns Monatshefte; 1858, "Anna Louisa Karschin," Westermanns; 1860, "Die weissen Berge von Neu Hampshire", Aus der Fremde; 1860, "Die Shaker", Westermanns; 1861, "Die Fälle des Ottawas", Westermanns; 1861, "Deutsche Schriftstellerinnen bis vor 100 Jahren", Raumers Taschenbuch; 1869, "Die Kosaken und ihre historischen Lieder", Westermanns.

The first of these articles may be somewhat specifically termed a critical biography of Captain John Smith, whose name and story have become a veritable national legend. It was a forerunner of her history of New England, which appeared in 1847, and bore the same stamp of thorough investigation into original sources. The history of Virginia could not be better given anywhere. The romantic element in the settlement of the old Dominion colony was brought out with remarkable skill. No new and startling facts appeared, but the old were presented with such a novel and instinctive grasp of causal sequence and significant interrelation that they were lighted up by a remarkable vividness and interest that the reader was scarcely conscious of reading history as such. Naturally in a work of this sort, her love of investigation of the Indian and his history found much satisfaction, for the name of John Smith is inseparably associated with that of the Indian King of Virginia, Powhatan, and his heroic daughter Pocahontas, to whose intervention his life is so customarily ascribed. To Germany, then intensely interested

in America and things American, this bit of early history must have been most welcome. For the student of American history today it contains valuable source material.

The next article, "Ausflug nach Virginien", was perhaps the most interesting and most valuable of them all. It was characteristic of the woman that her views regarding slavery, an institution which she hated with all her strength, should have made their first modest, if positive appearance, in a literary work so retired from American notice as a bit of travel description in a German magazine, and in the German language. She was always keenly interested in political and social situations both in Germany and America, but never felt that the expression of opinion upon them, with the immediate purpose of reform, was becoming to a woman. It is therefore only by a scrupulous study of her works that we find, here and there, concealed under cover of novel or history, certain of her expressions of sentiment that from their force were intrinsically worthy of broadcast publication.

With impartial and fearless judgment she struck at the cause of conditions as they existed in the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century. As she was not a native of either north or south, and as she loved her adopted country deeply and truly, her view was clear and unobstructed by prejudice. "A dark cloud hangs over the inner conditions of this land", she said. "The haughty presumption and blinded selfishness of the South have conjured forth this cloud; the narrow greed for money of the North and the cowardly fear of the specter of disruption of the Union have inactively watched it arise without making any plans for protection. And now it hangs over our heads black and foreboding, threatening to

break every minute. It is incomprehensible how carelessly and indifferently the North has looked upon the presumptions of the South for years."[1] Opposed to slavery as she was, still she did not approve the methods of some of the abolitionists as is evidenced by her remark, ".... offended by the passionate cry of rage of the fanatic abolitionist party and aroused by their demands for an immediate and unconditional surrender of all their property rights, they began to view 'our own peculiar institution' of slavery from another viewpoint; indeed, they began to nurse and pamper it."[2] Such extremists tried to set up the argument that the slave could appreciate freedom only through having once been a slave, just as the Spartans taught the Helots to appreciate the vices of drunkenness by making them all drunk. Again, the Christians of the South attempted to defend slavery on a religious basis, saying that it was the only means of bringing these ignorant, untaught Africans into the light of the gospels. This, as Talvj commented, was a horrible mockery, when one considered that legal marriage was forbidden to negroes in certain parts of the South, and that in South Carolina, at least, the laws forbade them to read the Bible for themselves. She pointed out that a view not uncommonly given utterance, that slavery was a natural condition of the laborer, and freedom, of the owner of the land, was indicative of a terrible state of affairs in a country based on principals of democracy. The disgraceful assault upon Sumner, the senator from Massachusetts, by Brooks, the senator from South Carolina, following Sumner's eloquent attack upon the Kansas affair and Butler's part in it, was, in her estimation, one of the chief of the incidents which finally awakened

1. Westermanns Monatshefte, Oct. 1856 - Mch. 1857, p. 376.
2. Westermann's, Oct. 1856 - Mch. 1857, p. 377.

the North to action. The half-hearted concern of the free states with regard to slavery, as well as to the presumption of the South, could in no wise find an excuse in her eyes. That the chains of the cursed institution had stifled progress was a fact patent on every hand as she travelled through Virginia; and still slavery found its defenders and advocates. Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin had, from a cultural standpoint, long since outstripped the southern states. The most primitive methods of travel were still in use in the South; bridges across streams, if there were any at all, consisted of tree trunks; the houses and hotels were inartistic and lacking in ordinary comforts; nature alone seemed at its best. "Like a destructive mildew slavery lay upon the land's success; like a treacherous cancer it gnawed upon its otherwise healthy body."[1] To her this blight was no longer a question of politics, but one of Christianity and humanity. Yet these sentiments, partisan and heartfelt as they were, were interwoven with admirable literary skill into what purported to be a purely descriptive sketch.

Interested as she was in America and its development, she could not see merely the external conditions and objects which came in turn to her notice as she traveled from place to place. When in Washington, she did not fail to attend meetings of the Senate; and her descriptions of the more important members of that body must have been most interesting to her German readers. Nineteen years before this, at a time when some of America's greatest orators were at their height, she had attended sessions of the same deliberative assembly, but to hear discussions how different! for

1. Westermanns, 1856-57, p. 637.

then the tariff, the national finances, and the right of nullification were problems which called forth bursts of oratory and eloquence. Now, for the most part, the purer manifestations of oratory were lacking, but the eloquence called forth by the vital questions of right and wrong was deep and sincere, and in her mind greater than the polished speech of Clay, Webster, and Calhoun. The men who debated these questions were greater statemen than the men of nineteen years before.

Impartial, unbiased writers,such as she,were needed in America at the time as never before, and as suggested, it was America's misfortune that Talvj modestly held her views so completely in the background.

A second biography in this group was that of Anna Louisa Karschin, that victim of unfortunate circumstances whose genius nevertheless produced, in the most unpoetical age of German literature, verses which received the commendation of Lessing. The career of this woman afforded one of the most remarkable and characteristic pictures of the times; and a rather extended treatment of the life of her mother, also accompanying it, justified itself in that it afforded a true portrait of a middle class character of the times. This 'Natur-Dichterin',the 'German Sappho', as Sulzer called her and as she called herself could only be criticised justly in the light of her time and her environment. Talvj did not attempt in any way to exaggerate the general estimate placed upon her worth, and I feel convinced that the subject appealed to her less from the standpoint of the woman and her genius than as affording an excellent opportunity to mirror the life of the first and second quarters of the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the character of

the woman was presented in a most vivid, interesting, and compassionate manner.

In her article upon the "White Mountains of New Hampshire", Talvj gave some very interesting descriptions of provincial life as well as of scenery, and showed how the hard, unyielding granite mountains were reflected in the narrow conservatism of the inhabitants of this state.

A Sunday with the Shakers at Hancock, Pennsylvania formed the basis for an interesting sketch of the rather fanatic and intellectually stultifying belief then so dominant in certain parts of Pennsylvania. She seemed to have the knack of describing just those details which added to the realism and interest of situations and conditions.

Her article on "Die Fälle des Ottawas" again gave her opportunity to satisfy her inclination toward historical narrative; she dealt for the nonce not with the history of American colonization, but rather with a phase of the struggle between the English and French.

Quite naturally, as a woman writer, she was interested in the German women who had previously contributed to literature. The article on "Germany's Women Authors up to a Century Before" was replete with such valuable information as that for which the general reader frequently stands in need, but is unable to obtain because scattered among so many sources, however, except in choice of material and facts, very little chance was given for original judgment in this paper.

As late as 1869, a year before her death, she once more found expression for her life long interest in popular poetry in an

essay entitled, "Die Kosaken und ihre historischen Lieder". In all of her work in the field of folk-song she showed the keenest appreciation and sympathy with the natural birth and unconscious development of poetry. I almost wish this article had been the last from the pen of this gifted woman. While the interests of her life were varied and her efforts were invariably successful, her one supreme concern was still the study of popular poetry and its bearing on the culture of civilization. This last article, comparatively unimportant as it was, would have completed the cycle of activity in the study of the ballad and related forms which she had begun forty-four years before, at the commencement of her literary career with the work on Servian folk-lore; and would thus have formed the most appropriate close of a life dedicated chiefly to that subject.

The variety of topical material of these magazine articles is a tacit witness to the wide interests of Talvj and the well rounded, comprehensive scope of her mind. She never manufactured literature, but wrote for her very love of expression and investigation. This love for the work left an invariable mark upon the style of her production. An intimacy of personality which attracted Germans and Americans alike seemed to enter into them.

One point of grest interest,- probably of even greater interest to her American than her German readers,- was her detailed explanation of many names of places, rivers, and houses - names which at this remote period of time frequently seem to us so extremely odd as to defy explanation. All too often nowadays, if we cannot find an explanation for a name, we disregard all possibility of legendary or real sentiment which may have been attached to the name and manufacture a new name or appropriate one from another

country. Yet a study of original names is tantamount to a study of history, for invariably, as Talvj unconsciously demonstrated again and again, the name is intimately connected with some bit of local or personal history. In the early years of this country personal history played an important role in the development of our political as well as our cultural history. It was by means of little details such as these, that she succeeded in making her papers very readable as well as valuable sources of information. The American need not dread to read her German articles, for the subject matter and her method of treatment have given them an incisive briskness which Americans claim to be lacking in ordinary German prose. Unfortunately the German articles are not accessible for general reading. However, she has drawn such splendid pictures of American life in the earlier years of the republic, in her book called "The Exiles", that a translation of the magazine articles is not warranted. The question of slavery is forever settled, and, excellent and sound as her views of this vital question are, they fill their place in the literature on that subject in their original German form.

CHAPTER VII.

A Study of the Ossian Question with especial emphasis on Macpherson's Ossian.

At a time when the cry "Back to Nature" was resounding through all Europe, when artificiality was giving way to spontancity, when the emotions were assuming their place as a guide to right living, when the poetry of primitive peoples was being studied as a means to the revivifying of formal literature, when the vague and sentimental deism of Rousseau was swaying the minds of many, James Macpherson startled the literary world with his songs of Ossian. An interest in the Scottish Highlanders was already well established, for they seemed the exemplars of a natural mode of existence, unrestrained and unaffected by an artificial civilization. They were still children of nature, and a wild nature at that. In order to understand better the situation that gave rise to Talvj's discussion, it will be well to give a brief survey of the so-called Ossian question, which has been more or less actively discussed and disputed for more than a century.

In 1759, when James Macpherson was at the Spa of Moffat in the capacity of a traveling tutor, he struck up an acquaintance with the author John Home. When Home expressed an interest in Highland poetry, Macpherson told him that he possessed several specimens of this traditionary poetry. Not knowing a word of Gaelic, Home suggested that Macpherson choose one poem and turn it into English prose. Macpherson reluctantly consented, and chose for translation the "Death of Oscar" and several smaller poems. The delighted Home, showing them to several literary friends, finally gave them to Dr. Hugh Blair, a famous theologian and literary critic.

The latter, becoming enthusiastic, sent for Macpherson and begging him to translate all he had in his possession, promised to get them before the public. Macpherson hesitated saying that he could not do justice to the spirit of the poems and that he feared an ill-reception of them; but finally Blair prevailed upon him, and Macpherson translated some sixteen pieces. These were published in Edinburgh in 1760 under the title Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland and translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language. Blair wrote the preface. The book was immediately successful. David Hume, Horace Walpole, William Shenstone, and Thomas Gray were all enthusiastic and eagerly asked for further details of Gaelic poetry. Blair felt sure that an old epic composed by Ossian, the blind son of Fingal, lay hidden somewhere, and wrote to London proposing that a subscription be raised to encourage Macpherson to make a search for it. Macpherson at first shrank from the proposed task, but in the end he could not resist Blair's zeal and enthusiasm, and when £100 was raised to defray expenses he accepted the commission. He knew what he was expected to find. In September of 1760 he began his journey, going through the shires of Perth and Argyle to Inverness, thence to Skye and the Hebrides, while later he extended his investigations to the coast of Argyleshire and the Island of Mull; picking up Mss. here and there, and committing to paper some oral recitations. In 1761 he returned to Edinburgh and, settling near Blair, began to translate. Ten months later his book entitled Fingal appeared. Unfortunately, his Mss. and the copies of songs taken from oral recitation as well, entirely disappeared, so that his own word to which his personal morals did not give a very redoubtable backing, remained as a testament to the

genuineness of his sources. His reference to what he had found was always ambiguous. Johnson, a member of the East India Company, and others urged him to strengthen his assertions by a publication of the originals, but in vain. Fear that a comparison would reveal the forged nature of much of his so-called translations, was the verdict of ninety-nine out of a hundred men. Suspicion as to their authenticity was fanned into a flame, and fierce disputes arose, in the course of which no less a person than Samuel Johnson almost came to blows with Macpherson. Walpole's summary of the quarrel was that Macpherson was a bully and Johnson a brute. Hume, who at the beginning was one of the most ardent believers in Macpherson, changed his attitude to one of equally ardent condemnation.

While Macpherson is still believed to be an impostor, England does not now take Dr. Johnson's extreme view that every one of the so-called poems of Ossian was forged. That there was some genuine Gaelic ballad poetry was proved by the Highland Society of Edinburgh which sent a commission in 1797 to inquire into the nature and authenticity of Ossianic literature. The result of this investigation was not very satisfactory for, as published in 1805, they reached the general conclusion that Ossian poetry of an impressive and striking character was to be found generally and in great abundance in the Highlands, but thus far no one had unearthed a poem similar in title or tenor with Macpherson's publication. It was impossible, the report decided, to determine how far Macpherson had taken liberties in supplying connections and adding to or shortcning certain incidents, refining language, etc. Subsequent researches by Scottish antiquaries have had little better success. One manuscript of consequence was found, The Dean of Lismore's Book,

which dated from 1512 to 1529. This dispute over the authenticity of Ossian certainly had one great result in that it led directly to researches into the antiquities of the Kelts, Teutons, and Slavs.

So much then for a brief survey of the situation in England. In no land was Ossian greeted with such general and unbounded enthusiasm as in Germany. Wilhelm Scherer said, "Addison had already directed attention to the English ballad poetry and Klopstock, Gleim, and others had profited by his example. Bishop Percy's collection of English ballads was, therefore, received with general rapture in Germany, and the sentimental heroic poetry of Celtic origin, which Macpherson published under the name of Ossian was greeted with enthusiastic applause by a race of poets full of sentiment and war-like sympathies."[1] There were two principal reasons for this enthusiastic reception. In the first place, it had long been the belief that the Celtic and Germanic nations had one and the same origin, the Celtic, perhaps, being the more ancient; Ossian then was the long hoped for German Homer. In the second place, it seemed as if this ancient bard was truly the voice of nature, the representation of primitive man unadorned. Up to this time all that poetic feeling had to feed upon and to satisfy its longings,- aside from the classics, of course,- was the works of such writers as Boileau and Batteux. Two years before in 1762 an incomplete translation of Shakespeare had entered Germany and had commanded immediate attention. It is a matter of small wonder, then, that when Ossian came to Germany in 1764 it received such an enthusiastic welcome, for it meant satisfaction for a long felt want.

1. Scherer, A History of German Literature, translated by Conybeare, vol. ii, p. 56.

The number of writers whose whole production, from that moment, assumed an Ossianic hue, or the number of discussions and translations of Macpherson's work, would indicate the extent of the new Celtic interest. Translation followed translation, Talvj tells us in her introduction; Denis, Harold, Petersen, Rhode, Schubert, Jung, Huber, Stollberg, all claimed German origin for this great bard of nature. Klopstock, Herder, and Goethe came forward as enthusiasts for him; indeed "the best and the noblest of the nation called him their favorite poet." Klopstock and Herder never doubted the authenticity of the poems. Herder, the father of the 'Volkspoesie' movement in Germany, based many of his theories in regard to popular poetry upon the songs of Ossian. He spoke of him as the "man I have sought". Klopstock in his enthusiasm cried out, "Thou, too, Ossian, wert swallowed up in oblivion; but thou hast been restored to thy position; behold thee now before us, the equal and challenger of Homer the Greek."[1] Goethe, in his first glow of appreciation derived great inspiration from the songs for his Werthers Leiden, but in his later years, in the light of the scientific investigation into Germany's own past which destroyed the old belief in a mutual origin of the Celtic and Germanic nations, he became thoroughly convinced that these songs were not genuine.

The enthusiasm did not stop in Germany; for Italy, Spain, France, and even Poland and Holland had their eras of Ossianic literature. In the meantime the dispute raged blindly in England. From the controversy there, the seed of suspicion was slowly and surely carried across the waters to the continent, and there in turn developed new disputes and investigations which finally worked against the popularity of Ossian as a piece of original literature.

1. Moulton, Library of Literary Criticism, vol. iv.

Within a short time, it became generally accepted that Macpherson had not translated the songs of Ossian but had cleverly,and it must be admitted with considerable genius, collected and fitted together, arbitrarily, a number of unrelated smaller songs and fragments, and given to the whole the tone and effect of a connected narrative. Macpherson's great and unpardonable sin, as Talvj saw it, lay not in the publication of his Ossian, but in imposing himself upon the public as a translator instead of an author. As the latter, with the tendency of his age in mind, he might have occupied a most honorable and significant position in the history of literature, for as Saintsbury said, "The imposture of Macpherson is more interesting as a matter of tendency than of essence. The world wanted romance; it wanted the Celtic vague."[1]

During the same year in which Talvj's Die Unächtheit der Lieder Ossians und des Macpherson'schen Ossian insbesondere was published her Charakteristik der Volkslieder also appeared; whether written earlier or later is of small moment. However, from that part of the Charakteristik dealing with Scottish folklore we realize how rich she considered the field of Scottish poetry. This interest together with her unquenchable thirst for truth brought into play both the knowledge she had gained from a study of the German interpretation of the question and from a study of the English which included all the research that had been going on since 1797, as was evident from the sources she cited in her discussion.

In the manner characteristic of her studies in Popular Poetry, Talvj introduced her Ossian discussion proper by giving her readers an historical survey of the primeval period in Scotland,

1. Social England, vol. v, p. 262.

and of Scotland's early relations with Ireland. The relation between the two countries, she said, became closer by intermarriage and education until, as early as the thirteenth century, the Irish language changed from a court language into a general language among the inhabitants of the Scottish lowlands. The Gaelic remained in the mountains and on the islands.

After following the historical background with a brief resumé of the quarrel, beginning with the first suspicions of Hume, aroused immediately upon the publication of Ossian in 1760 and 1761, Talvj next presented her German reading public with arguments against the antiquity of Macpherson's Ossianic poetry. She admitted the presence of anachronisms in popular poetry, due to the fact that it was the product of various times and various authors, but never, she declared, could the anachronisms of an historical personage who sang of events either immediate, recent, or contemporary, be justified. The Ossian of the third century certainly must have known that his father was not Cuchullin's contemporary, for Cuchullin died in the second century. He must have known also that neither in Scotland nor Ireland were there "castles and moss covered turrets"[1] in the third century. Stone came into general use only shortly before the English invasion in the twelfth century. These and other anachronisms, according to Talvj, made it seem almost impossible that Macpherson's Ossian should ever have been looked upon as possessing historical accuracy.

Without denying the fact of verbal transmission of legend and history, Talvj pointed out that the transmission of some twenty thousand lines, together with the main facts in the history of five

1. Talvj, Ossian, p. 46.

generations, became a second weighty argument against the genuineness of the work.

A third argument was the question of the language itself. Some of the greatest Gaelic and Irish scholars before Macpherson had been unable to interpret the Erse dialect, and Macpherson did not profess to be a great scholar. To attempt to prove the genuineness of the songs of Ossian by means of manuscripts found in recent centuries was to deny the constant flux of language from one period to another. "Traditional folk-songs", said Talvj, "are in this sense comparable to ships, which are ever being repaired with new wood, until in the end scarcely a single part in them is exactly the same as it was originally."[1] To pick out the original from the interpolations was the work of an expert philologist; and Macpherson himself said that it was very difficult for him, on many occasions, to translate the Gaelic. Macpherson's Ossianic manuscript, what there was of it, was in modern Gaelic, and not in the Gaelic of the third century. Furthermore, Macpherson's Ossianic manuscripts, when compared with productions of the earliest times, showed clearly that both content and form were unoriginal. The verse of the undisputed MSS. seemed uniformly to consist of fifteen or sixteen syllables, with a caesura in the middle, and with the first division rhyming with the last; the verse of Macpherson's 'original songs', however, occurred nowhere in the oldest historical Gaelic documents. The variance in content was equally obvious.

Talvj did not attempt to disprove that Finn remained for centuries the central figure of Gaelic legend. "Just as Arthur and his round-table for the Britons and later for all the western peo-

1. Talvj, Ossian, p. 54.

ples, Dietrich and his heroes for the Germans, Charlemagne and his peers for the Franks and Spaniards, Wladimir and his 'Bojaren', Lasar and his 'Woiwoden' for the Russians and Servians, Dschangar and his twelve warriors for the Kalmucks, Finn and his followers remained for the Gaels the central point of the great cycle of legend which imbedded itself, with all its peculiarities, in the various localities of the country."[1]

The original Irish Ossian documents displayed a language which was always simple; similies and metaphors were not frequent. The action as well as the language of Macpherson's Ossian was refined to such an extent that even the superficial student of popular legend realized an unnatural nicety. The heroes in the original Ossian fragments were quite as noble as those of Macpherson, even if they were less shadowy and more the creatures of human passions; the women were quite as beautiful and charming, even if less refined and polished. The characters of the original bore the stamp of their time. "Folklore is often rough and harsh, but it is always fresh, direct, sensual, and artistic", said Talvj and for this very reason the sublime and pure speech, the commanding character of Macpherson's Ossian argued against its genuineness.

The Highlanders were a credulous people and intensely proud of their nation. This patriotism had blinded them to the fact that the home of Ossian was Ireland. There was scarcely a song found among the Highlands that did not have its original counterpart, written or traditional, somewhere in Ireland. In earlier years, it was realized that Scotland was entirely dependent, from a literary viewpoint, upon Ireland. If a Gael wanted to learn more

1. Talvj, Ossian, p. 67.

than warfare, he went to Ireland, where, even amid warfare and bloodshed science flourished in the convents and monasteries. After the English invasion, it was not at all improbable that the Scotch attendants of the Irish princes carried the songs back to their homes.

In comparing Macpherson's version of the "Schlacht von Lora", said Talvj, "with the Volkslied of "Ergons Einfall", one could scarcely call the former a translation. It was a clever prose adaptation of the same thought.

For the sake of argument Talvj supposed that Macpherson might have possessed some old Erse manuscripts that served him as originals. But with this supposition four questions arose at once: Were the manuscripts really from a single period of antiquity? Was the language Erse? Was it Ossianic poetry? Was Macpherson able to decipher it? Nothing in the nature of this kind of manuscript was found among his papers. A repeated reference, however, was made to a Gaelic manuscript in the possession of the family of Clanronald. It was said that Macpherson received this manuscript, but what developed from it was not known. All Highland poetical composition of definite periods was written in Irish-Gaelic. The folksingers imitated this as best they could in dialect. The Erse language was regarded as a dialect of the Irish-Gaelic. As far as Talvj could discover it had never been written or printed prior to 1754, when a minister by the name of Macfarlane used the Erse in a popular appeal. With the Reformation the Highland's dependence on Ireland ceased, and in 1684 a Gaelic version of the Psalms was made in Scotland, Latin letters being used. And so, if Macpherson possessed old manuscripts these would have been Irish-Gaelic. He himself ad-

mitted once that he could not read an Irish manuscript of the fourteenth century which was shown to him; yet according to O'Reilly it was not unusual for Irish scholars of even slight training to decipher fourteenth and fifteenth century manuscripts.

From these arguments against the possibility that Macpherson had been a translator of Gaelic, Talvj proceeded to prove that in all probability he was himself the clever author of Ossian. Undoubtedly, at first, he had no idea of going so far with the work as he did. Choosing the third century as the background in which to give his fancy free rein was a clever method of arousing the attention of the public to extraordinary themes. Another clever stroke of Macpherson's was that he gave to all the poems of his first publication a sort of authenticity, as for example in the case of his great epic Fingal. This was based on the "Song of Magnus the Great". His "Schlacht von Lora" was based on "Ergons Landung" etc. In his second publication, however, very few if any had any basis of authority. The success of the first volume probably made him feel that a second would be quite as generally accepted, on the reputation of the first, even if he did not take the added precaution of giving it an authentic basis.

Literary forgery such as Macpherson's was not at all an unheard-of thing in England. Lauder before Macpherson, and Chatterton, contemporary with him, were both forgers. The former made Latin verses which he gave to the public as the original of Milton. The latter composed poems which for a time he made the public believe to be productions of the fifteenth century. But, said Talvj, "Such an artistic web of falsehoods, lies, misrepresentations, and unfounded assertions, such a hodge-podge of historical events, had

never before appeared in the history of any land, and this it is which despite all his fame as a poetic genius will ever be the constant reproof to Macpherson."[1]

In one very important point Macpherson was not farsighted enough in his cleverness; he left out the element of religion almost completely. In all of the Ossianic poetry of both Ireland and Scotland there is a great intermixture of religious feeling, even of Christian religion; yet in substitution for it he introduced only a species of mythology of the supernatural. Whatever critical or general approbation was given to this spirit world was a clear tribute to Macpherson's genius, for not a hint toward its invention was discernible in the Gaelic folk-songs.

The history of how, in the face of an unceasing insistence upon the publication of the original documents, Macpherson still delayed, making excuse after excuse until finally, when he did present them, the critics felt firmly convinced that they were Gaelic translations of his own English, and poor translations at that, is known to all who have followed this question with any degree of thoroughness. Sir Walter Scott, among many others, made no doubt whatever that Macpherson himself had translated his own English, making good use of his innate feeling for the form and style of the old Scotch bards. "I am compelled to admit", he said, "that incalculably the greater part of the English Ossian must be ascribed to Macpherson himself, and that the whole introduction, notes, etc. are an absolute tissue of forgeries."[2] "In the translation of Homer", he again remarked, "he lost his advantage.....

1. Talvj, Ossian, p. 110.
2. Lockhart, Life of Scott.

A tartan plaid did not fit his old Greek friend."[1] The success of his Ossian misled him into believing that he could master the style of Homer; he was a man whom talent led astray.

In closing her discussion, Talvj presented a concise account of Gaelic folklore in Scotland in her own time. She pointed out that Gaelic folklore, as such, was fast disappearing, and unless the most strenuous effort should be made to preserve what fragments were yet available, this treasure of song and poetry would be lost irrevocably to the great hoard of the folklore of primitive peoples.

This, then, was the contribution which Talvj made to the discussion concerning the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian. No one in England or Germany was so qualified to end the dispute; for since the time of Herder no scholar had possessed so comprehensive and deep a knowledge of folksong as she, not even Wilhelm Grimm. The disputes in England had become mere sectional squabbles with England on one side entirely ignorant of the nature of the Volkslied, and Scotland on the other entirely carried away by a blind and false patriotism. Without scientific basis for the arguments these squabbles became so petty and involved that their solution seemed almost impossible. At this juncture, viewing the whole situation calmly and without bias, in the light of the discovery of Germany's own past, and of the new vision opened up by the old Norse folklore and, what is even more significant, in the light of the knowledge which she herself had brought before the world by unearthing the very springs of a living poetry among the Slavic nations, Talvj took up the discussion. The result of her work was a triumph not only for her but for truth, for the disputes in both England and Germany

1. Talvj, Ossian, p. 110.

came to an end. It is only within very recent years that Saunders and Smart have written books dealing with the question. But a careful investigation of these only reveals the fact that as early as 1840 Talvj had access to practically all of the material which is to be obtained even at the present day; and she used it more scientifically.

CHAPTER VIII.

Her Novels.

In the early part of the eighteenth century questions of the relation of life to moral standards became objects of popular consideration, and a new light of interest was shed upon everyday existence. Those who had once attended merely to external circumstances in human affairs came more and more to investigate the inner thoughts and feelings of man. Out of this subjective tendency of the age was evolved a new psychology and a new morality. In the family, as Richardson showed in his Pamela, lay new motivations and new conflicts; and problems of the family are a prominent, if not a dominant, factor in literature to the present day. The women characters lost their stereotyped character and became, according to David Swing,[1] the white ribbon that binds together the truths gathered in the fields of science, religion, and politics. Talvj illustrates this in her Heloise.

This tendency to introspection led, as we know, to the melancholy romance of passion of which Goethe's Werthers Leiden was the foremost example. The whole period is sometimes characterized as the 'Empfindsame Werther-Zeitalter'.[2] This introspection was a marked characteristic in Talvj's novels and short stories, whose common theme was a sensitive heart, brought into conflict with the rough world, and frequently overcome by the struggle. This romantic tone was maintained even in her last novel, Fünfzehn Jahre, (1868) in which she developed natures almost antipodally

1. Modern Eloquence, vol. ix.
2. Mielke.

removed from the realistic creations of the later nineteenth century. Again and again, especially in her short stories, her characters were embodiments of that vagrant, self-centered romanticism which, following its own free inclinations, wandered inevitably into wrong paths. Through the favor of external circumstances conjoined often with the pure love of a good woman, they were brought back from the very brink of self-destruction into the sane, well-ordered atmosphere of practical activity from which they had wandered. This was especially shown in Life's Discipline, Ein Bild aus seiner Zeit, Der Lauf der Welt, and others. In Das vergebliche Opfer the development was entirely subjective, and in every way displayed the influence of romanticism.

It is significant that out of eleven productions, generally classed as novels, eight should have been novellen, that form of German narration which, while corresponding in many respects to the English short story, in many others stands midway between it and the novel. As a literary form it was undoubtedly much better calculated to appeal to the popular taste than the German roman, but whether Talvj consciously adopted it for this reason or not is unknown. At any rate, she was not a novel writer in the ordinary sense of the word 'novel'; while as a writer of sketches, especially those with a romantic coloring, she was decidedly successful. The following quotation from a New York newspaper of 1851 expresses the sentiment I have in mind in regard to her works in this field: "The tales of Talvj will not charm the simpering Miss of the boarding school. They will be pronounced uninteresting in the drawing room of fashion. But in the domestic circle, where intellect is

admired and purity is reverenced, where knowledge and virtue are sought in the book that is to entertain the family group, these truthful tales of the human heart will be more than welcomed as guests, will be loved as friends." The names of the characters in Talvj's books will undoubtedly be forgotten by her readers, as will also the characters, but the harmony or discord struck by them on life's harp will continue to sound forth either as an example or as a warning. The tragedy of life, as she showed us, lies not within the realm of the tangible, but rather within that of the spirit. Jealousy that venomous enemy of persons and nations alike, played a chief part in her representations of life; sometimes prevailing, sometimes vanquished by reason and by the steadfastness of a woman's devotion,- the latter a prominent element in almost all of her works of this nature.

All of her novels were written in German; but four, at least, have been translated into English. The fact that Heloise passed through three English editions in one year testified strongly to the general acceptance of her work by American readers. Die Auswanderer also passed through several English editions, appearing first under the title of The Exiles, and later as Woodhill. It would of course have been preposterous to expect that her works, psychological in content as they were, should attain a brilliant popularity; and if popularity be measured by circulation, her novels fell far short of it. If lacking in a showy appeal, however, they nevertheless possess a depth and truth in the portrayal of characters and situations which should insure for them a lasting existence in the field of literature. One of the New York papers in speaking of her works said, "They possess a classic simplicity

of style and clearness, and of refinement of presentation. They are true pearls of literature in the field of novel writing."[1]

Her novels fall into four divisions. In the first are six short tales which her daughter, Mary, published after Talvj's death, under the title of Gesammelte Novellen and two, Maria Barcoczy and Kurmark and Kaukasus, which I was unable to find. The second division is represented by Heloise, the third by Fünfzehn Jahre and the fourth by her most important novel, Die Auswanderer. I shall discuss them in this order, with especial emphasis on the last.

The tales contained in the book Gesammelte Novellen represented in a certain measure the beginning and the end of a long literary career. Nearly a half century elapsed between the first story, "Die Rache", written in 1820, and the last, "Ein Bild aus seiner Zeit", written in 1868. The author herself realized that several of the earlier ones bore, too plainly, the stamp of youth, and intended to reconstruct them; but death overtook her before she accomplished this task.

The characters are, as Talvj herself said, "not ideal characters, such as the heart creates out of immature poetic fancy; they are human beings whom I portray - truly human in their sins and their virtues. The reader will seldom wonder about them, but perhaps he will sympathize with them and love them. It is not the force of an exterior fate which will attract the reader's attention for a time; their peculiar characteristics, their feelings, their reason, their hatred and their love, their insight and their deceptions, these traits form the attractive features. Not external

1. New Yorker Belletrisches Journal.

but internal necessity leads the characters on to their happiness, or their misery." The last sentence of this quotation, particularly, expresses the whole underlying thought of her stories - "In each human breast rests the power over one's own destiny."[1]

The first of the tales in this collection, "Die Rache", was written when Talvj was just twenty-three years old. Its theme, the distress and suffering brought about by the irony of fate, is not as effective as that of several of her later productions. The characters, all persons directly or indirectly connected with an army post, act under the rules of military convention, and so in a measure are not invested with the atmosphere of real life. The young woman about whom fate weaves an impenetrable net of unfortunate circumstances is to come into possession of an inheritance on condition that she marry, in her twenty-fifth year, a man who will surrender his own name and assume hers in order that the patronymic of an ancient lineage may not become extinct. This situation in itself leads us to anticipate male characters of an unpleasant type. The stipulation of the will is fulfilled in the natural and logical way - a loveless marriage. The closing words of the heroine sum up the whole situation: "Oh, the vengeance of fate is terrible!"

"Verfehlte Bestimmung", written also during the author's twenty-third year, is a story whose end is likewise a loveless marriage. The repetition of this theme might lead the reader unacquainted with the author to suspect a covert allusion to untoward domestic circumstances in her own life. But no marriage could have been more happy and congenial than that of Mr. and Mrs. Robinson. Her keen sense of sympathy, and her unusual power of spiritual in-

1. Gesammelte Novellen, p. xxxi.

sight, quickened as both were by the influence of romanticism, must account for the trend of her stories. It is interesting to read into these works, not characters as such, but characters symbolic of the German nation. Germany was very real to her, and in 1820, at a moment when its many mistakes had so undermined its strength that the future was very uncertain, the faults and trials of the land she loved appealed to her as would those of an intimate friend.

In 1823 a work of greater pretensions and of greater merit appeared under the title of "Menschliche Schwäche", or, as the caption of a later English translation ran, "Life's Discipline". In this tale the calamity of the heroine is that she loves, deeply, tenderly, passionately, where love is not requited, where love is abused and betrayed by avarice and lust. Notwithstanding the lapse from virtue which the plot implies, the heroine possesses many noble and redeeming qualities. The philosophy of a character such as hers, and there are many, is best expressed in the author's own words: "The greatest misery which can befall a woman is to love a bad man. The true essence of her love is the total abnegation of her own will, the immersion of all self-dependence in the self of the beloved object. Woe to the heart if it then falls out with the better qualities of mankind! With her faith in the moral worth of the man she loves, a woman loses all the happiness of love. As long as the better element is not entirely lost in him, if it is perhaps the single power of a passion, whatever be its name, that ruined him; if the brute has perhaps gained in him a momentary ascendancy over the man, and drags him to the depth of destruction, or even into the slime of low vulgarity; in this case, it seems

almost as if, beside the lost esteem, there might still exist in the tenderest heart an affection for the ruined object. It is only that the flame does not shine anymore! But fatal to every living weakness in a woman's breast is creeping treachery, calculating, deluding craftiness, when she has once recognized them under their mask. In the cold hands of low egotism the heart turns to ice. Love is dead. We are cured - but are we happy?" The evils of egotism and selfishness she considered paramount among all others. "Not the untamed passion of the human heart, which, bursting out into a flame, spreading ruinously, destroys all barriers; not the unbridled force, which in wild outbreaks of savage roughness,crushes under foot tender blossoms, lovely flowers,- not these constitute the greatest, the truest evil of the world; it is cold, creeping egotism, heartless selfishness, which, with its attendants, treachery, deceit, and hypocrisy, easily bears away the palm, because it knows what it is doing, while passion, in blind fury, shatters its own weapons." Truly this is psychology and philosophy blended into one by a keen insight. As a counterpart of her philosophy of love we have her philosophy of actions expressed in this same work- "For it is not the actions themselves that give worth to man or take it from him, that should gain him our approbation or draw upon him our contempt. Only when we have learned to know well the way which the soul has taken before it arrived at its aim, the deed; only when we are aware what outward powers have influenced the formation of the inward resolution, what seed education and early powerful circumstances have strown in each human heart, and in what degree Providence has made it susceptible for such seed; then only may we judge, admire and approve, excuse or condemn." These bits

of truth are skilfully woven into a most romantic story. The historical information blended with this tale will render it an acceptable book to any who desire an insight into the affairs of central Europe.

The fourth story of this collection is "Das vergebliche Opfer", written in 1826. It,too, is a portrayal of an unsteady and unfaithful love; for its chief theme is the abuse of a loyal and affectionate friendship. In Meta we see the inner nobility, the quiet harmony of the soul that has mastered its destiny. In Victor we see the strength of a man whose loyalty to his friend is more to him than his own happiness and comfort; in Hilbert we see the effect of treacherous and debasing egotism. Meta, the symbol of purity, is a figure which with all her idealism has enough real traits to make her powerfully human. There is a modern touch in this story, perhaps because human nature is so universally the same; and while in many respects it is not plausible, its general effect is sternly convincing. We have Hilberts all about us, who in their blind ambitious struggle for fame and power resort to unfair and unreasonable means of attainment, little considering the suffering they bring about. Hilbert is selfishness, Victor altruism, and Meta the victim of life's tragedy.

In 1828 her novel "Der Lauf der Welt" appeared. This, too, has as its theme an unsteady and faithless love; but while in "Das vergebliche Opfer" the strength and weakness of two men were portrayed, in this story the action centers about the strength and weakness of two women. In the former, despite betrayal and faithlessness, a true love dies only with the heart which gave it birth, in the latter, when the source of flattery is removed the heroine's

love for her friend's husband at once perishes. Yet both women are representative of their sex, for love is the essence of existence in both. "Strong and weak are they through love", says Talvj, "strong through that which they share, weak through a lack of it. The heroism of loving wives, the humble bonds of famous regents, the self-denial of a mother's heart, the poisonous envy of a step-mother - perhaps these are all shadings of one color."

The last tale of this collection, "Ein Bild aus seiner Zeit", was with the exception of a short sketch entitled "Die Kosaken und ihre historischen Lieder", which has been mentioned in a previous chapter, her last work. Having herself passed through the heroic as well as the classical period of German history, she places the beginning of this story in the golden age of poetry and philosophy, and its end in the time of regeneration following the Wars of Liberation; in so doing, showing how the national awakening to a life of highest patriotic activity rescues the individual from a life of mere self-indulgence, such as it was frequently found in the aesthetic circles of this period. A husband imbued with the temperament of a poet and philosopher finds in a strange woman that intangible something with which his practical wife cannot supplement his nature. Clasped in each other's arms, they seek death together, believing that life without the possession of each other is impossible. But a kind destiny and the devotion of a loving wife, acting together, rescue the husband from an untimely and ignoble death. In the fascinating dangers of the campaigns of the Wars of Liberation, even then shaking Germany to its very foundation, the husband who realized that he needed activity, and that of the most strenuous kind, to restore a balance for his mis-

guided life, sought to free his burning spirit. For both husband and nation the wars meant regeneration; through them the former was restored to the joy and happiness of his family circle; the latter entered upon a new era of strength and development. "Ein Bild aus seiner Zeit is a short story, but one teeming with an intensity of human action and feeling that harmonize with the period of crowded national events and emotions that it represents.

Heloise, which comprises the second division of Talvj's novels, is entitled to special commendation among the productions of literature during the second half of the nineteenth century. It possesses an intense and unflagging interest, which is due in large measure to the author's insight into the mysteries of passion. Woman's love and heroism are purely and nobly portrayed. The character of the fair and saintly Heloise is more ideal than real, but it is nevertheless human in its capacity for growing through the discipline of sorrow. Natural touches of weakness and imperfection balance an excellence which would otherwise defy general acceptance. Like almost all of the other novels, it is not a book to read for the story only; however, it possesses strongly-drawn situations which, giving it all of the elements of a romance, make it fascinatingly readable. It is primarily a study of the psychology of the human soul, and the emphasis which, as ever, she lays upon the personality of her women makes the feminine characters particularly attractive.

The noble woman, 'die edle Frau', her mission, and her importance, are portrayed both by description and by contrast of characters. In this portrayal the influence of Goethe is evident.

His "Ich freue mich, wenn Kluge Männer sprechen,
"Dass ich verstehen kann, wie sie es meinen"[1]

is carried out in the character of Heloise. In Talvj's words, "Everything becomes fair women but meddling in political affairs," the same thought is expressed. Her own life carried out the same idea which the character of Heloise embodied.

The very accurate and thorough study of Russia and Russian conditions which the book contains constitutes a further claim upon our attention. Much of the story is laid in Russia, and conditions there are drawn with a realistic skill which carries conviction of the faithfulness of the treatment. When we recall that this knowledge of Russian life, customs, and geography was gained during a residence which terminated before her sixteenth year, we realize with renewed force the keenly perceptive and strongly retentive powers of the woman. Impressions once made upon her mind were like good seed planted upon fertile ground. The place of the action of this story changes rapidly and completely, but so direct and gripping is the writer's hold upon the reader's attention that the sudden transition neither confuses him nor mars the unity of the book. The situations balance each other in vividness and interest, and the author skillfully carries her hearers along without having them stop and question the real logic of the sudden transposition. The theme of the story stood uppermost in Talvj's mind; and while it would have suffered had the reader been permitted to analyze the details prior to a reading of the whole story, the making of such an analysis after an impression of the whole has been obtained can in no manner detract from it. The various political entanglements

1. Goethe, Tasso.

through which Russia had passed, many of which were within her own experience, were thus given vividness and interest.

The book was more popular in America than in Germany. The German critics found in it an exaggeration of sentiment that seemed to them to amount to sentimentality. They felt that her Russian situations were so boldly unreal as to interfere with the smooth development of the plot. On the other hand, the Literary World, one of America's foremost critical journals, said, "The plot is developed with dramatic skill. The interest is sustained throughout in this entertaining and instructive book." However,not all of the German criticism was unfavorable, for we read in the Kölnische Zeitung:"'Heloise' changes the respectful awe inspired by the author's remarkable knowledge as displayed in her history and Volkslieder into a happy inclination toward the more personal side of the writer. Talvj has keen insight not only into the greatest scientific truths but also into the deepest truths of the human heart."

Her precision in the use of the English language, as shown in her English version of this charming little story, was remarkable. The work reads like the production of a native, thoroughly familiar with the rather difficult idioms of the language, and yet still preserves some of Talvj's art in the use of the German language.

The third division, Fünfzehn Jahre, was a"kulturhistorische" novel. It is difficult to translate this word; perhaps its meaning can best be explained by an attempt to explain the distinction between historical novels and cultural-historical novels. The historical novel develops the struggle between the human soul and fate which grows out of general conditions and circumstances of human nature and society, from the great historical events of time;

the cultural-historical novel, on the other hand, draws its materials from the customs and cultural conditions of a definite period of time. The eternal element of love is brought into conflict with religious, legal, and philosophical evils. The solution of the conflict is determined, not by external events and incidents, but rather by forces contained within the culture of a people and the culture of an age. Great cultural movements rather than tangible and definite historical events form the background for the development of characters. In Fünfzehn Jahre this cultural element is pronounced. At the beginning one is led to expect a book of history; but very soon the cultural aspect assumes such prominence that the reader realizes that the romantic situations are developed by means of both kinds of influences. The gentle mildness of the "Herrenhuters" is contrasted with the sternness of the Prussian soldiery; stern polemic Rousseauism with the frivolous Parisian drawing-room philosophy. Woven into these contrasts are the incidents of the Seven Years' War and the events of the Russian-Swedish revolutions.[1] These were the elements out of which the author evolved her plot, her characters, and her general thesis. The tragedy of the main personages would be harrowing, were it not for the strenuousness of the background. The times were chaotic; an inner unrest was slowly germinating into the horrors of a French Revolution. The poetic injustice of the circumstances of life to the guiltless Agatha and Hohenhorst was finding its counterpart everywhere in life. There were many real tragedies even more startling than the tragedy of the story. Many readers may doubt the psychology of a truly loving heart failing to recognize its object of love

1. Idea from a clipping - Wissenschaftliche und Kunstnachrichten - 1868.

even after a separation of fifteen years. Just here, two of the cultural elements previously mentioned manifest their influence. The dreamy, visionary school of the "Herrenhuters", as well as the sensuous French society, in both of which Agatha was trained, were influences operating in favor of what might seem like a moral impossibility. There were little, intangible flashes of remembrance, or rather suggestions, which stirred in her tender heart, but it was a sort of unconscious remembrance. Into this failure of memory could be read, too, the effects of a second marriage, in which the image of her first and only truly loved one grew dim in spite of herself.

Talvj expressed most beautifully in this book her own undying love and admiration for Germany, and the German language and knowledge. Just one little touch will serve to illustrate this point. In recommending a tutor, the count remarks, "He is a German by birth and therefore, of course, a natural vehicle of all knowledge." Again and again touches similar to this occur throughout the book. It was the product of her mature years, and as such showed the full growth of a brilliant intellect, enriched by a deeply religious spirit. With clever satire Talvj attacks sanctimoniousness, while, on the other hand, she extols piety impartially and warmly. Her own deeply religious nature reveals itself in the reverence of attitude expressed in this work.

We now come to the novel which was of greatest interest to her American readers, perhaps, because it dealt with America and Americans. Before entering upon a discussion of this novel it may be well to consider briefly certain works of another author which were similar in nature to Talvj's Die Auswanderer, or The

Exiles. As early as 1828 Charles Sealsfield saw the influence of European politics upon America and expressed this in his The Americans as They Are. During the year 1823 he made an extended trip through the southern and western parts of the United States. In 1824 he was active in Jackson's campaign for the presidency; and in 1825 he took part in the Harrisburg convention, whose proceedings he later depicted vividly. In 1825 he made another trip south, passing through parts of Illinois and Indiana on his way to New Orleans. The two books which were the outgrowth of this tour, the one just mentioned and Lebensbilder in der westlichen Hemisphäre, are exceedingly valuable as cultural-historical studies. His works are among the few American historical novels true to life, written as they were by one unrestrained by prejudice or political or social connection. He gave a photograph of Americanism in all its details, national and moral, public and private, spiritual and material, religious and political. Until the beginning of the fifties his books were eagerly read. With the establishment of the Republican party a great change in attitude toward the past swept over the whole country and America began to forget her own origin. But the importance of past culture and history is being recognized more and more, and these early pictures of Americans and American life are being brought forth for reconsideration in the light of cultural history.

Just at the time when the political and social change of the early fifties began to sweep over the country, we see a rival to Sealsfield in Talvj. There are no other names during this period worthy of being included in the same class with these two writers. Both were German, but both loved America impartially. Franz

von Löher placed Talvj above Sealsfield, despite a statement that Sealsfield was the "greatest American stylist". "No one", said Löher, "has ever penetrated so deeply into the real American thought and feeling, which contain just as much of the bizarre as of the charming". To him Sealsfield's portrayals seemed overdrawn and clouded in comparison with Talvj's clear naive truth. This statement is slightly unfair, inasmuch as the subject matter is treated from a different view-point. Talvj penetrated into the secret recesses of American thought; Sealsfield observed more superficially, and drew word-pictures of what he saw. The two, Sealsfield and Talvj, supplement each other, and together supply American literature with a contribution quite unique in nature. Some of the other writers on phases of this early life are Buckingham, Dwight, Thwaite, Trollope, Martineau and Margaret Fuller, but none of these have unrolled for us such vivid pictures as are found in the works of Sealsfield and Talvj. Their descriptions are in the nature of impressions gained through travel, and as such make most agreeable reading; but a reading of them gives no one a feeling of better acquaintance with his American ancestors, nor an insight into the existence of forces working for or against a national culture. Talvj succeeded better in giving this insight than Sealsfield, and I would, therefore, place her first in this particular field of American literature.

Let us turn now to a consideration of her book Die Auswanderer, which appeared in 1852. Chronologically, discussion of it should have preceded that of Fünfzehn Jahre; but from the standpoint of importance I feel justified in giving it the prominent place, at the last.

Judged as a connected tale, it has many faults of technique; but as a series of sketches it is above adverse criticism. Talvj would have us consider it in the light of a series of sketches, for in her introduction she said, "I do not aim to give a full pictureof North America to my readers, but rather only detached pictures out of American life, as they have appeared to me during the experience of many years".[1] She purposely omitted politics from her scenes, for in her estimation they were outside of the sphere of a truly feminine woman. Some of the characters are drawn so vividly, and with such startling adherence to reality that they seem to be real personages. To those, however, who voice this impression she answers that individual truth is not always personal truth. None of the characters are portrayals of definite persons, none of the situations are descriptions of actual occurrences. In her pictures there is no flashiness of color; a calm quiet tone surrounds them all. Even sketches which picture intense moments of pain and suffering are characterized by quietness and restraint.

A brief consideration of the beginning of the story will suffice to show the trend of the book and to suggest the possibilities of its development. A wealthy German girl, an orphan, comes of age and inherits her property. In an interview with her guardian, she announces her intention of proceeding at once to America, with her lover, Franz Hubert; she has succeeded in obtaining Hubert's release from prison, where he had been thrown for a political offence, only on condition that they should emigrate to the United States. Neither Hubert nor Klothilde, for this is the heroine's name, are at all fitted in temperament for the trials and

1. Talvj, Die Auswanderer, Vorwort.

hardships to be encountered in setting in a new country. Types of the highest culture and civilization, they little realize what it will mean to them to live, in the midst of primitive conditions, the life of the early pioneer. Klothilde's guardian, who is himself desirous of marrying her, uses all his power to dissuade her from taking this step, but in vain. She joins her lover at Bremen, expecting to be married before stepping upon the ship. But as the ship in which they are to sail for America is on the point of departure, and all is hurry and bustle, the lovers have no time for the marriage service, for Klothilde will not rush through the sacred ceremony as one rushes through a meal while the coach waits at the door. Thus, there being no pastor on board, they are obliged to postpone the ceremony until they shall reach the New World. All unpleasant embarrassment is saved, however, by the presence on the ship of a young married couple, dear friends of both Klothilde and Hubert. The destination of the voyage is New Orleans. When near the coast of Florida the ship takes fire and nearly all on board perish either in the burning vessel, or by a sinking of the overcrowded row boats. One boatload of passengers alone escapes, and after being driven about on the ocean for days, its passengers suffering tortures apparently beyond human endurance,it reaches the shores of Florida. Klothilde is among the rescued. Hubert would have been also, but at the last moment he had rushed back to secure Klothilde's property, and when he returned the boat was crowded. Insane with fear and excitement, one of the men already in the boat beats him back with an oar and Klothilde sees him disappear into the gaping jaws of a huge wave. The boat gains the land with its occupants more dead than alive. Alonzo Castleton,

the planter to whose home Klothilde is carried gives her the hospitality of his home and care during a terrible illness of three months, during which time a kind Providence robs her of consciousness. After her recovery she realizes the necessity of supporting herself. All of her property has been sacrificed; the house in New York through which her money had been sent to America has failed and she is penniless. Through Alonzo, she obtains a situation as teacher of German and music in a private family at Charleston. This portion of Talvj's book is unusually successful. The household scenes are admirably drawn, and the two sisters, Virginia and Sarah, are true character portrayals. Virginia has fiery Spanish blood in her veins, which makes her daring enough to run off with an adventurer, to bid defiance to her relatives, and to outwit the keenest of them. In the pages of an undisguised romance the part this temperament of Virginia's plays in uniting Klothilde with her miraculously saved Hubert would be acceptable; but the boldness with which the author binds together the threads of the theme constitute the weakness of the work as a novel.

The first volume of the story ends with Klothilde's recognition of Hubert and her subsequent marriage to him. The second volume is taken up largely with their trials and difficulties in making a home of their own. Klothilde and Hubert have many, many things to tell each other, and it is in these conversations that the author so skillfully works in her German ideals. At last the two are settled at Woodhill, a beautiful New England village; and here on the very eve of the moment when Klothilde is about to become a mother, Hubert is ruthlessly snatched from her, the victim of a duel which is the outgrowth of a jealousy caused

by his former relations with Virginia. The young mother cannot withstand the shock of a second parting and so, peacefully and with a smile upon her lips, she joins her beloved in that sleep of kindred souls which knows neither awakening nor parting.

As mentioned, one of the most successful portions of the book deals with Klothilde's life with the Castletons . Sarah is exactly the opposite of her dashing sister. She is pious after a fashion dear to the heart of Cotton Mather, with whom, indeed, she is able to claim relationship. Her library is thus described: "In the middle of the plain white marble mantel-piece lay an enormous Bible, bound in velvet and gold, and concentrating in its outer garment, as it were, all the splendor which otherwise was carefully avoided in the whole room; on both sides of this stood, in tasteful and regular groups, some smaller books, mostly memoirs of pious missionaries, Doddridge's Rise and Progress, Hannah More's Practical Piety, Melville's Bible Thoughts, and several other books of the kind. On the toilet table lay another Bible, smaller in size and plainer in dress. This was obviously meant for reading, the large one only to reverence."[1] Almost the first question Sarah puts to Klothilde is, "How many hours daily do you spend in prayer, Miss Osten?" "I would wish you," she continued, "to look upon this humble chamber as the haven to which the Lord has brought you to learn to praise his Almighty name even for the storms by which he has shattered the slight vessel of your earthly happiness." All of her conversation is in this strain, sincere beyond all doubt, but altogether stamped by the narrowness of formal orthodoxy. The following excerpt shows the lifelessness of such a faith: "Klothilde

1. Talvj, The Exiles, Chap. vi.

approached Sarah's table, and opened the Bible at the mark which she had left in it. She wished to see what part of the Holy Scriptures had exerted such a strangely soothing influence over her, after her heart had just been pained by her conversation about her sister's dangerous course, her father's indifference, and the early loss of her mother. She saw with astonishment that Sarah had just been reading the twelfth chapter of Joshua, the record of the great warrior's victory, which contains a topographical description of the conquered land and the names of the thirty-one vanquished Kings. And yet in reading it, she looked as attentive as if she were reading the Sermon on the Mount, or some other immediate outpouring of the Spirit. Klothilde did not know that Sarah made it a rule to read the Bible through in order, from beginning to end, at her morning and evening devotions, and only at other times allowed her heart the luxury of drinking in its favorite portions. And are there not among her brethren in the church many most estimable families, where the genealogies and the reports of the bloodiest atrocities of the degenerate people of God, serve just as much for an introduction to family prayer, as other parts of the Bible, because it might appear like sinfully despising the Word of God to pass over these and certain other portions, at the readings of which the mistress of the house, at least, would prefer not to have her daughters and young maid-servants".

Sarah was so overwhelmingly pious that, when difficulty occurred in getting help, she thought it right to pray that God would send them "a very good servant-girl". She knew a lady who prayed for an excellent girl, and "lo and behold! the next morning the Lord sent her an uncommonly able girl from New Hampshire."

This girl was "a real blessing in the house. She cooked, baked excellent bread, washed and ironed, helped wash and dress the children, and took two of them to church with her." But her pious mistress was not able to keep her, for a still more pious lady offered her a quarter of a dollar a week more. The irony contained in this description is altogether charming.

Another admirable bit of satire in character portrayal is contained in the following: "Besides the question about the restoration of the Jews, Mrs. Gardiner had another favorite subject, upon which she liked to turn the conversation, and gather different opinions. It was this: What had become of the ten lost tribes of Israel? Mrs. Weller, with whom she often used to discuss the subject, adhered firmly to the old view, that they are to be found in the North American Indians. But for Mrs. Gardiner, who had inherited from her ancestor, the celebrated Dr. Cotton Mather, an unconquerable repugnance to the filthy, stiff-necked race of Indians, it being, as it were, in her blood, this origin was far too good for them, and although she did not acknowledge it, she was inwardly much more inclined to put faith in the old theory which Hubbard, the historian mentions as a possible one, namely that this brood was begotten by Satan himself, during his banishment, when he took a couple of witches, with him for company. The ten lost tribes she believed, with other learned persons, to have been discovered in Persia among the Nestorians, or rather among the ancient Chaldeans, for she was of the firm opinion that these two nations were one and the same, and could not refrain from some doubts of the Orthodoxy of those scholars who rejected this arbitrary supposition..... There was another point in which the two ladies differed, that threatened

sometimes to have more serious consequences. It was the question whether the Sabbath commenced on Sunday at sunrise or on Saturday at sunset."[1]

Mrs. Weller, who was born in Connecticut, was of the latter opinion, so that in her home the housework of the week had to be finished before sunset on Saturday - a requirement which, in view of the demands of her four children, and the lack of help, often wrought upon her a considerable hardship. It was the duty of the eldest little daughter to gather together the children's toys and lock them up in the cupboard until Monday morning. Even the two year old baby dared not murmur. But after sunset on Sunday night, if it were summer, the children might run about in the garden and look at the flowers. If it were winter they might listen to the parents'stories of their own childhood and at times interrupt them with laughter or with questions. This description is continued in the most attractive way. It, with others, portrays a domestic life piteously misled by the narrow teachings of a senseless orthodoxy.

The quiet home scenes in Richard Castleton's home suddenly change into a picture of terrible storm. Virginia, growing more and more restless and irritable under the secret of her love, vents her ill humor on her slave, Phyllis. With malice in her heart the latter dashes to pieces the picture of her mother, Virginia's dearest treasure. The subsequent whipping of the slave, and the successful attempt to bribe her back into good humor by the mere gratifying of a material desire, give Talvj a chance to express her views upon the slavery question. "Klothilde sighed deeply.

1. Talvj, The Exiles, Chap. x. Part 1.

For the first time she saw clearly, how terrible a curse the condition of slavery was to mankind. Abuse of the body, infringement of personal liberty, exorbitant demands of work - what are all these compared with the degradation of one's finer sensibilities, with the humiliation of self-respect, with the very deadening of all desire to be free and master of one's own soul."

As stated in a previous chapter, Talvj did not approve of the methods of many of the abolition leaders; but this did not mean that she opposed abolition. Her attitude is clearly brought out in this story of The Exiles. Nothing in Uncle Tom's Cabin had a greater abolitionist tendency than many of her views expressed by her character Bergmann. But her method was altogether innocent of the antagonistic sting which she so severely condemned in others.

Another great cultural movement which she did not overlook was the emancipation of woman. In one of Klothilde's conversations with Mrs. Gardiner she answers in the true spirit of Goethe to the question, "What language, Miss Osten, do you think was first spoken in the world?", "I have no idea; such learned investigations we German women gladly leave to our philological students." Not only in educational but in political matters the American woman was clamoring for an equal position with men. Hubert's reply to Klothilde's complaint over an act of discourtesy well deserves a repetition in the twentieth century- "It may be, at least I know, her behavior made it right for me to keep my seat undisturbed." The movement was then in its earliest stages, and was calling forth little more than general ridicule.

Both Sealsfield and Talvj were struck by the emptiness of the "Young Ladies' Seminary" type of education. Talvj said: "The

advantage of a regular school education is recognized among all classes of society to such an extent that the young girls whose instruction in youth was necessarily neglected because of the poverty of the parents, often engage in domestic service for some years, in order to get a little money with which to attend a 'Young Ladies' Academy' for one or two years."[1] And thus they obtain a higher education! The result often, as she pointed out was an arrogance on the part of the daughter which often inspired a refusal to recognize the ignorant mother, or, from the other side, an empty pride of the mother in her daughter's wonderful achievement. Sealsfield said this about the same subject: "Now to make a passing remark, this is the manner and fashion in which our mushroom aristocracy is formed. A couple of daughters are sent to a fashionable school. On their return home, they attract with their companions a few dozen young coxcombs, and their daughters' glory naturally reflects on the good papa and the dear mamma."[2]

Where Sealsfield remarked upon the emphasis placed on money, Talvj remarked upon that placed on birth. She said: "The Germans notice with a secret smile what immeasurable worth this son of a democratic republic places upon noble origin and family relationship. A longer residence in America should teach them that no nation on earth places more value on excellent birth and bonds of relationship than the democratic Americans."[3] Sealsfield, on the other hand, said: "No nation in the universe has so stiff an appearance as ours, and especially our good families; for thank Heavens! our middling classes, the real nation, know nothing of

1. Talvj, The Exiles, Chap. iv, Part 2.
2. Sealsfield, Sketches of American Society, p. 7.
3. Talvj, The Exiles, Chap. iv, Part 2.

it. But our aristocracy - that is, those who would like to be it - if it depended on them our popular independence would soon be destroyed. The man who has a hundred thousand dollars will not condescend to look at one who has fifty thousand, and the latter is as arrogant toward him who has only ten thousand. You are just as respectable as you are heavy."[1]

The conditions of culture in America as regards music, art, poetry, and religion were impartially considered, not as inviting superficial criticism, but as offering one explanation for the slow advance of general refinement. The practical trend of American affairs, the material interests of the whole nation, made the American spirit less ready to receive the influences of culture than the German spirit. Did Francke have a material motive in founding his orphans' asylum in Halle? Have the great academies of science and art in Germany been evolved out of material motives? And still Talvj doubted this general opinion; for she did not feel that a painting need be less beautiful when painted to fulfill an order than if it merely evolved out of an inner feeling unaroused by the material motive of pay. Rather, she said, that which opposed the development of pure art and higher literature in America was in part a national self-love, which made the nation wish to stand in the front rank and dictate to her neighbors, and partly the absence of true criticism. This absence of real criticism was also the hindering factor in the development of an American literature. A lack of discrimination and a senseless enthusiasm for everything written held back and crippled the development of true poetry. In architectural art America already gave great promise, which Talvj

1. Sealsfield, Sketches of American Society, p. 74.

recognized and praised. She believed, however, that speculative philosophy, so fertile in Europe, could never become national in America. A group in Boston had taken it up under the form of Transcendentalism, but for it to be accepted nationally seemed to her out of the question. It was not practical nor useful - the great slogan of the American nation. And, said Talvj, "It lies in the very nature of things that a democratic republic in itself cannot be an especial promoter of the fine arts and sciences..... but this will not prevent the true genius blazing a path for himself."[1]

With descriptions and judgments such as these Talvj filled out and wove together a story of charm and interest. A truth to life clearly reflective of actual experience is so evident that one must needs believe in the characters without having seen any even faintly similar. As I read her books, I am perpetually reminded that they are the work of a highly cultivated author. Her pictures are not mere stiff, hard, accurate reproductions; they are photographs enriched and vitalized by feeling and sentiment. I feel, always, the power of her keen observation and her individuality of expression. Her style is simple and unstudied, clear and readable. Everywhere is traceable the exquisite touch of a woman's hand, the touch that strives not so much for outward beauty as for the upholding of true ideals.

1. Talvj, The Exiles, Chap. iv, Part 2.

CONCLUSION

As one considers the works of Talvj in their entirety, a very simple and at the same time logical division suggests itself, namely: scientific and aesthetic. Under the latter head may be grouped her poetry, comparatively insignificant in bulk, and her novels; under the former all her other writings, for the most part either purely historical, or - to use a term especially applicable to her work in popular poetry - cultural historical.

For a young nation, lacking a long period of historical development, it is not hard to realize how significant a really scientific treatment of the events of early settlement was. Mute evidence to the fact that previous to the Revolution America possessed practically no history is furnished by the poverty of historical literature covering this period. The long chronicles and records of events and dates cannot be viewed as the organized product of historical research, and - as has been pointed out in a previous chapter, their very authenticity is doubtful. Into a nation lacking the historical sense because it lacked a history, Talvj came as the representative of a country where the historical viewpoint was paramount. She had absorbed the influence of that whole period in which the present, gropingly trying to bring itself into communication with the classical past, discovered that changed and progressive conditions of life made a union with bygone ages impossible; and thus was suddenly born into a consciousness of its trenching upon a brilliant future. The time was instinct with a desire to embrace the whole cycle of development and the

culmination of this desire was the historical viewpoint. In her whole historical method we may trace the influence of Herder's and Humboldt's views concerning history. I link the names of these two authors, because Herder's view of history was very thoroughly developed by Humboldt, especially in the latter's essay Über die Aufgabe eines Geschichtschreibers. Herder viewed the whole development of the world as historical. Lamprecht expressed this viewpoint very well when he said, "As the Greeks developed art, the Romans law,so each nation in turn will develop other sides of life until the cycle of culture is complete and God's purpose is accomplished."[1] With this idea as a basis Humboldt defined the task of the historian as representing, simply and sincerely, what had happened. The events of the past are evident to our senses, through their results, in part only; the rest must be arrived at by a process of analysis and reasoning. What appears is dissociated, out of its proper relation, and isolated; the real truth of what has happened rests upon the discovery of these invisible parts which joined with the visible, will make the whole apparent and tangible. And this work of juncture, said Humboldt, was the task of the historian. That Talvj derived much help and inspiration from both of these great representatives of German culture is evidenced by her effort to act upon this very formula. This method is especially well illustrated in the last chapter of her history. We appreciate more clearly the fact that causes were hidden during this period of unrest at the close of the seventeenth century from the glaring saliency of resulting events. Her success in combining the scattered facts of haphazard records into a related unity, thereby

1. Lamprecht, Deutsche Geschichte, vol. viii, p. 323.

achieving a consummation in which Humboldt says the historian is like the poet, in my judgment, makes Talvj's treatment of this especial phase of American history stand out conspicuously above that of any of her contemporaries. Her tracing of the inner history of religious evolutions, for example, shows how an idea strove and grew until it won for itself an existence in reality; and her work here is one of the soundest possible illustrations of Humboldt's principles that in all that happens there rules an underlying idea not immediately perceivable, but clearly recognizable in the occurrences. Again, in her History of John Smith, she embodies both Herder's and Humboldt's belief that the world's history is repeated in each individuals' inner life; that the spirit of humanity is the spirit of the world. By making her History of John Smith an intensive study of the History of Virginia she showed how great individuals are more likely to be the results of great political movements than the causes of them. She thus, of course, anticipated a method of historical presentation which today is enjoying an increasing vogue.

Turning now to a consideration of the other sphere of her scientific writings, her books upon folk lore, we see her again embodying the idea of the three great scholars, Herder, Goethe, and Grimm. Herder's great aim was to penetrate to the innermost nature of man by a study of his folk songs. His interest was not the interest of the abstract scholar or collector, but a vivid practical desire to implant the fundamental principles of human nature into the culture of his times, thereby furthering its development. Goethe and Grimm both held this view and in their individual ways influenced German culture by the results of their stud-

ies in ballad and popular poetry. Talvj's actual purpose with her Charakteristik der Volkslieder was not to undertake a scientific examination of popular poetry, but rather to place emphasis upon poetry as a natural expression, and a simple safeguard against the danger of ultra-refinement and artificiality which even at that time seemed to make itself felt in America. By introducing this great point of view of Herder she opened the eyes of cultivated Americans to that source of human culture which had saved Germany from the disastrous effects of artificiality. At the close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth American intellectual life, under the influence of French models, was fast losing its vitality. The ideas which she brought to America were ideas which were worthy of being sown in the virgin soil of our nation and nurtured into full growth with the infant republic.

Through Goethe and Grimm, Talvj received her first inspiration to study popular poetry. This inspiration became an earnest purpose which, when awakened to full life, carried her farther into the field than most of her predecessors, and than any of her contemporaries. She did not follow Grimm's steps into philological research, but she was as great an enthusiast as he in collecting old songs. Herder had hoped for a German Percy, who, like the good English Bishop would discover and gather together a similarly rich harvest of old songs. In a measure she fulfilled his hope. Her treatment was original in that she made these songs the basis for a cultural history, first giving significance to it by prefixing a political-historical setting. Again, her work was original in that she undertook to explain the importance of this folk lore, pointing out that as the natural expression of a primi-

tive people it was significant to literature and to national culture. She likewise sought a possible source of national culture for America in its primitive inhabitants, which fact may in a measure account for her sympathetic attitude toward the Indian.

In the aesthetic division of her works she shows the influence of movements and tendencies rather than personages. Her poetry, as has been suggested in a previous chapter, bore in tone and meter a great similarity to Schiller's; but it hardly seems profitable to pause upon it longer than to point out this fact. In her novels, however, which reflect the decided influence of several distinct movements, and her strong inclinations toward romanticism, then in its wholesome and lusty youth, make her work worthy of more extended attention. Her novel The Exiles, written in 1852 gives poetic expression to the great contemporary tendency in Germany, and indeed in all of Europe to seek freedom of thought and action. It is a fact remarkable in itself as well as one significant to her work as an interpreter of German culture in America, that she stands alone among America's writers in giving artistic expression through the pages of a novel to this great contemporary event and movement, one of whose immediate results was the immigration of 1848. It is significant also that she should have caused her heroine to be cast upon the coast of Florida instead of New England, that the German thoughts and ideals embodied in Klothilde should have been implanted first of all in the home of southern aristocracy, thence wending their way northward but slowly. A narrow and provincial pride in the Puritan fathers had kept people from realizing that the real seat of culture was in the South and that this was the most fertile field in which to develop new ideals.

The success with which Talvj transmitted these various influences of culture to the American people can as yet be guaged only indirectly, by a logical inference from its value and the impressionability of the public to whom it was presented, for critical estimates of her work in American magazines and newspapers were few. The lack of them is by no means due to any want of appreciation by American editors of her services, but to the undeveloped state of literary criticism in this country at that early period. The crudity and inadequacy of this department of national literature was but natural in a country which, placing more emphasis upon quantity than quality of literary output, and frankly imitating English and French masters in all its performances, had not yet realized its potential value. The development of criticism was hampered, moreover, by the fact that America's energy was being consumed in an effort to readjust, and to establish a firm basis for government,- that its cultural forces were being consumed by the harshness and difficulties of material existence. In general, we know from the journals and diaries of some of America's best educated and most highly cultured men that German ideals and thought exerted a marked influence upon them. Furthermore, we may infer from Talvj's personal acquaintance with many of these cultured men, already alluded to, that she helped exert this influence. First in Boston and then in New York, her home, we are told, was the frequent center of social gatherings. Her membership and her highly-appreciated work in the New York Historical Society bespeak a recognition of her cultural and scholarly attainments; and as her historical presentations were always of the type of calm scientific investigation we know certainly that to some Americans, at least,

she was interpreting the German viewpoint. The ready acceptance of her papers on the part of the leading American magazines indicates, also, a very substantial recognition of her ability.

More directly, recognition was accorded her by contemporary New York newspapers at the various times at which her works appeared. Upon the appearance of Heloise in 1851, a number of exceedingly complimentary comments appeared. The hope was invariably expressed that more books might follow from the pen of the author of Heloise. Through this book, one American newspaper remarked, Talvj brought to many Americans the atmosphere of Russian life; a service of especial interest and timliness at a moment when translations of many Russian stories were being disseminated both in Germany and America. A new work by Talvj, as another paper expressed it, was an event which could not fail to attract considerable attention, and was not likely to be overlooked by her numerous and intelligent circle of readers.

Critics were well agreed as to the significance of her treatise upon the Literature of the Slavic Nations. To be credited with having supplied a marked and often lamented deficiency in English, American, and even German scholarship, as one New York paper did, is praise of the highest type, praise which carries with it a recognition of her ability and keen intellect. The London Athaeneum of 1850 speaks of this work in the following terms: "We know of no book in our own language which gives anything like so complete and attractive an epitome of the literature and the various idioms of the great Slavonic nations North and South."[1] In this work she entered a field rarely trodden even by that class

1. London Athaeneum, 1850, p. 1069.

of scholars in Germany who push their researches into regions which the mass of philologists never think of exploring. Still another significant statement discovered in one of the newspaper comments related to the translation she made of her own work, Life's Discipline, in 1851. "Talvj is teaching us", said this article, "to appreciate the Hungarians in spite of the North American". This would imply a somewhat active interest in the Hungarians and their history just about this time. May it not have been this very interest which led her to translate a book which so artistically but faithfully portrays Hungarian history and political intrigue?

An unfortunate feature in regard to these criticisms, which, it should be stated, are pitifully meager and lacking in detail, is that they are accessible only in the shape of clippings, to which the names of the respective newspapers and magazines have not been attached. One, recognizable by its type, is from the New Yorker Belletrisches Journal, a German newspaper of decided worth. Another, as we know from a slight reference made in the course of the discussion is from some theological publication. During these years many of the theological publications, in the east especially, presented reviews, criticisms, and even productions of the highest literary merit. Criticisms of secular productions were at that time of greater frequency and significance than they have perhaps ever since been; for today magazines of this nature are inclined to treat only those works which bear directly on theological subjects.

From the critical resources available, unsatisfactory as they are, the conclusion is evident that in the early and middle years of the nineteenth century, Talvj fulfilled a great service to American culture as a disseminator and interpreter of the culture

of a nation which has always been recognized as distinctive for its universality. The mission of the German-Americans to the future higher civilization of America, is, we may say, to preserve and cultivate the best of their inheritance in music, literature, art, religion, and philosophy, in order that each individual may be, in the country of his adoption, the highest possible exponent of German ideals and principles. Through the Germans a healthy sentiment has been infused into a sort of Puritan asceticism, and ideals have tempered materialism and have regenerated orthodoxy by representing humanity and religion as one. This, too, we may say, was Talvj's mission in America; to bring the New World into the higher spheres of human life by uniting the best of German spirit with the best of American spirit, in the hope of establishing on this side of the Atlantic a truly national culture, worthy to rank with the culture of the older nations beyond the seas.

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APPENDIX.

The following is a list of her works arranged chronologically with regard to their publication.

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* Books I have been able to obtain.

The following personal notes are of interest, perhaps, because of their authors.

New York, Nov. 1, 1858.

My dear Mrs. Robinson:

My wife is not well enough to come into town and attend your party on Wednesday evening, though she is rather on the mending hand. I do not often pass the night in town but hope to be able to do so on that occasion. .....My wife desired me to express to you her love and her regrets.

I am dear Madam,

truly yours,

W. C. Bryant.

New York, Nov. 1, 1858.

Mr. Olmstead regrets that a previous engagement will prevent his acceptance of Mrs. Robinson's kind invitation for Wednesday evening next.

New York, Jan. 9, 1850.

My dear Mrs. Robinson:

Mrs. Bancroft, who isn't very well this morning,begs me to write to you that for tomorrow evening she has two engagements of rather long standing. ..... It is particularly a source of regreat to us, as nothing would be more agreeable to us than to visit you and Mr. R. in the social friendly manner you propose.

I remain,

Dear Mrs. Robinson

Very truly yours,

George Bancroft.

New York, July 25, 1854.

Dear Madam: I shall be most happy to avail myself of your kind invitation to take tea with you this evening.

Very sincerely yours,

Bayard Taylor.

VITA

The writer was born in Quincy, Illinois, September 1, 1882. After graduation and one year of post-graduate work at the Quincy High School, she continued her education at the Illinois State Normal University at Normal, graduating from that institution in 1902. During the following seven years she was an assistant in the High School at Lexington, Illinois for one year; Principal of the Fulton, Illinois High School for three years; and instructor in Latin in the Dixon, Illinois High School for three years. In the summer of 1909 she entered the University of Illinois from which institution she received her Bachelor's degree in June of 1910. The next September she entered the Graduate School of the aforesaid institution as a University Scholar in German, where she received her Master's degree in 1911. In 1911 she was elected a University Fellow in German, receiving her Doctor's degree in 1913.

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